THE COLONIAL POLICY OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM

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INTRODUCTION

"Empire" is a word which English people are accustomed to hear from their earliest years, but most of them, unfortunately, die without ever knowing, except in the haziest manner, what the Empire is, or how it was built up. Equally certainly the existence of the Empire exercises a decisive influence on the life, and very often also on the death, of every British-born man or woman. The Lancashire cotton weaver, the Dundee jute worker, tool-makers, engineers, shipyard workers, seamen and dockers, agricultural labourers find their daily bread, their hours of work and wages, dependent on what is happening in the Empire.

The very newspapers are full from day to day of long debates upon the question of the Indian constitution, of armed expeditions on the North-West Frontier, of the effects of the Ottawa agreements, of the trial and sentence of English and Indian workers at Meerut for "offences" which are the daily occupation of thousands of English workers—trade union and factory organisation. Yet there exists no book which explains simply and straightforwardly from the workers' point of view what the Empire is, how it was created, how it is ruled, what is the condition of its people, and in what way their welfare is bound up with ours.

Never was it more necessary to have clear ideas on this subject. For the crisis through which the country is now passing, the three million unemployed, the cutting down of wages, the general lowering of the conditions of millions of toiling people, the changes in the various political parties, all these things can only be considered and understood not as purely English problems, but as a crisis of a huge political and economic system, affecting a large part of the whole world and known as the "British Empire."

The chief features of this crisis appear permanently on the pages of the daily papers, in the smugly superior *Times*, or the more popular and hysterical offspring of the houses of Beaverbrook, Odhams and Rothermere. They are, briefly, the questions of British naval supremacy, of Empire trade, and the

isolation of the Empire from foreign competition, of India, and of the pound sterling. These are all questions bound up with the very existence of British imperialism, and they are equally connected with its whole history, arise from its peculiar development, from those special features, particularly of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which distinguish the development of this country, of British imperialism, from its rivals in America, Germany, France and Japan.

To understand these features, we must remember that England, becoming in the early nineteenth century " the workshop of the world," was able comparatively early to create for herself a colonial monopoly. The British Empire is not only the largest in the world. For a very long time it was almost the only one worth considering. This state of affairs changed at the end of last century, when Britain lost her industrial monopoly and capitalism as a whole began to enter its last, imperialist phase. Nevertheless, right up to the last war, when the already swollen British Empire swallowed the colonies of Germany and most of the former Turkish Empire, that colonial monopoly was not seriously challenged.

However, this proud position of lord of the world, is no longer secure. The Dominions, developing their own native capitalism despite many obstacles, have threatened England's economic monopoly over great parts of the Empire. In the colonies themselves the growth of native capitalism, despite all efforts to hold it back, has proved another menace to the supremacy of the " motherland," but, more important than either of these, other countries have at last broken into the sacred estate of the English landlord. The Japanese and the American have threatened the very heart of the Empire, have burst into the Indian market, conquered the Far East between them, poured their goods into the Dominions, Canada, Australia, the Irish Free State. Japan is carving out a new empire in north China and Manchuria, and talks of challenging British domination in Asia. The U.S.A., fighting for the vast markets of South America, come up at every step against their British rival.

" Britannia rules the waves " is drummed into every schoolchild, and up to 1918 it was certainly true. Britain enjoyed a monopoly of naval power which was seriously challenged only by Germany, and the German fleet, as we know, ended up in the British ship-breakers' yards after being fished up from the waters of Scapa Flow. Yet by the time the last German battleship had been raised from the sea-bed and towed bottom

upwards to the ship-breakers, Britannia no longer ruled the waves. The American navy is now the equal of the British, while the Japanese are not far behind. The leaders of the British General Staff are racking their brains to devise new methods of gaining naval supremacy in the armaments race, which is now entering on its last lap.

Economically, Great Britain has always differed a good deal from other imperialist countries. The growth of great industrial financial trusts, capitalist monopolies, has been the chief feature of imperialist development. But British imperialism, as Engels pointed out as long ago as 1882, is above all *colonial imperialism.* The development of monopoly in the British Empire proceeded differently from that in other countries. It went first of all along the line of the growth of immense and powerful monopolies over sources of raw materials and in shipping. Chilian Nitrates, oil, tea, cotton, rubber, tin, silver, gold, in these and other products of the Empire and semi-colonies, the British monopoly trusts were built up. Certainly in home industry concentration went on, but much more slowly and unevenly. So till recently we had in Britain the paradox of a free trade country at the centre of a highly protected Empire.

The post-war period has changed all this. The great financial monopolies, acting through the various post-war governments and particularly the two Labour Governments, have tremendously hastened the centralisation and rationalisation of British industry in order that it may compete with its new and enormously powerful rival, the United States. So, although British industry imports most of its raw material, although the British workers are fed on 85 per cent. of imported food stuffs, and therefore the reasons for preserving free trade are very solid ones, nevertheless it has become necessary for monopoly capitalism to turn Britain into one of the most heavily protected countries in the world, in order that monopoly prices may be maintained on the home market, and rival imperialisms fought abroad.

Capitalism, shaken by the greatest economic crisis in history, is trying to find a way out along the lines of " national self-sufficiency," so-called " autarchy." This means in fact, the intensified exploitation of the home market, ruthless cutting down of imports through high tariffs and economic war on all other countries through intensified dumping and penal tariffs. Britain cannot carry out such a policy owing to the dependent position of her industry. But she can carry through a policy

of "imperial self-sufficiency," and this is what is now being done. The Ottawa Conference took the first steps. The effort to exclude Japan from the Indian market, the new "sterling bloc" of the dominions (except Ireland) with the home country, are the next steps. The sterling bloc aims at economic war against both the United States and Japan, now attempting to win British markets by inflation, and against the so-called "gold bloc" countries led by France.

Empire self-sufficiency is only possible, in so far as it is possible at all, through intensified exploitation of the colonial peasantry, by taking away their gold and silver savings to form the fund on the basis of which the pound fights the dollar, and by keeping the prices of raw materials in the colonial countries down to the minimum, a minimum which means starvation and ruin to the producer. Even so, the new structure marches to war with ominous cracks in its walls. Canada cannot afford to carry on a long economic struggle against a country with whom she is economically much closer connected than with Britain. Ireland remains outside altogether. Many of the Australian states are bankrupt and crying out against dependence on the London banks and money market. Dominion industry has no intention of allowing Britain to steal its home market.

It cannot be expected that the colonial peoples will consent to remain the passive victims of this struggle for life which British imperialism is now joining with its American rival. The leaders of the Indian National Congress, alarmed at the damage Japan is doing to the Indian cotton industry and by the situation among the desperate and starving peasantry, in terror lest a militant working class should begin to press forward again, have surrendered abjectly and finally to British imperialism. The last humiliation of accepting the new slave constitution is only a matter of time. Yet each time when such a surrender has taken place, in 1930, in the spring of 1932, again to-day, a new wave of revolt among the worker and peasant masses rises. It is not without significance that the Congress surrender and the march of the Peshawar brigade against the rebel Mohmand tribesmen have taken place simultaneously. The struggle of the frontiersmen is never unconnected with the position in India itself.

No less interesting is the effort to strengthen British influence in Central Asia and south China. Slowly but surely in the last few years Tibet has been absorbed into the Empire, a vast country, nearly as large as British India itself, and rebellions

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have been fomented in the Tibetan borderlands of the Chinese Republic. In Chinese Turkestan, in South Yunnan, forces armed with British weapons have risen against the Chinese Government. According to the American journal, *China Weekly Review*, there is a regular depot established in Kashmir for the export of arms to Central Asia. It can hardly be considered an accident that many of these arms are found in the hands of bandits who raid the Soviet frontiers in Asia.

Tibet seems a long way off to the London busman or the Glasgow shipyard worker. Gandhi has become a popular joke, while Palestine is only connected with the Jews and Lord Melchett. The traditional ignorance of the Empire and the struggle of its oppressed peoples among the English workers is almost as strong to-day as when Engels wrote of it in 1882 in a famous letter to Kautsky. One thing has done much to break it down—the five years' trial of the heroic prisoners at Meerut, who have become symbols of the unity of the toilers of East and West to every advanced worker in this country. Even so it is not realised that the whole character of our own labour movement has been determined by the exploitation of the colonial peoples, and that the issue of the struggle of the British working class, the question of socialism in England, cannot be considered apart from the national liberation of the peoples of the Empire.

The whole development of British capitalism to-day, in its effort to break through the meshes of the crisis net, is towards a more ruthless exploitation of its imperial monopoly, combined with violent repression of the working-class at home. The way to open dictatorship, to war, is being clearly prepared. In all this development the colonial question occupies a central place, and becomes more clearly a life and death one for the worker in his fight for freedom.

For reasons of space many important colonies, such as Malaya, are excluded from this study.

CHAPTER I

FIRST STEPS IN COLONIAL POLICY

Early Colonial Rivalries

Serfdom was abolished in England much earlier than in other European countries (at the end of the fourteenth century). The development of commodity relations inside the old self-contained feudal society rendered this inevitable, while at the same time the abolition of serfdom was accompanied by a big development of merchant capital. The wool trade was the first great export trade of England, carried on particularly with the countries of Northern Europe. The first English colonies were in the Straits of Dover, on what is now French territory, and guaranteed the unhindered carrying on of that trade.

Decaying English feudalism, already beginning to sicken with the new capitalist society which was growing within its framework, was brought into conflict with its nearest neighbour and most powerful obstacle to the development of trading, French feudalism. The "Hundred Years War" which followed between the two countries brought both of them to the verge of extinction and anarchy.

In England the old feudal aristocracy, unable to rule the country any longer, and hold down the rising tide of peasant revolt, was replaced after a bitter struggle by a new landed aristocracy, which was closely connected with trading and had enriched itself by the confiscation of the church lands, the chief support of feudal economy in the country, and one of the greatest obstacles to the fullest development of commodity production. The new landlord, interested in the rise of capitalist production, the enemy of the Catholic Church, which was the chief support of mediæval feudalism, became for a time the leading figure upon the English scene.

So it came about that the discovery of the American continent and the sea route to India by Spanish and Portugese navigators brought much more advantage to an England already well advanced on the road to capitalist development and having the

natural advantage of an island position on the new sea routes, than it did to the feudal monarchies of the Iberian peninsula.

Trading companies, having behind them the open support of the State, began to wage a piratical war against Spanish trade and undertook robber raids upon the Spanish colonies. This war was carried on by both sides with the utmost ruthlessness, but most of all the plundered native population of America suffered from it. For both English and Spaniards exploited it mercilessly, enslaving it and forcing it to work till completely worn out. In the end the struggle became an open one between both countries, and England, less hampered by feudalism and with a more advanced naval technique, completely defeated Spain in the maritime war which followed. Soon after this, on the east coast of North America and the west coast of Africa, the first English colonies were founded as trading posts.

The end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century saw a great development of a new "line" of trade which brought with it collossal profits—the trade in black slaves which was carried on between Africa and the West Indies. Whole negro tribes were kidnapped and sold in America and the West Indies for work on the sugar and tobacco plantations. For over one hundred years England fought with her rivals for the monopoly of the slave trade. During all this period warlike contests with Spain and Holland never ceased. As a result of successful military and naval attacks on Spain, England in 1713 managed to obtain the monopoly of the slave trade with the Spanish colonies. The prosperity of such great and wealthy cities of England as Bristol and Liverpool, was founded on the huge profits of this slave trade. The slave trade was carried on right up to the first quarter of the nineteenth century, that is, until, with the development of industrial capitalism in England, slave labour became less profitable and the export of slaves from Africa less advantageous. Moreover, at this time the Spanish Empire in South America began to collapse and was embraced by a great national revolutionary movement, which destroyed one of its most profitable markets.

A great part of the primitive accumulation of capital, thanks to which the development of industrial capitalism became possible, came from the profits of the slave trade. For two centuries, from the end of the sixteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth, the English bourgeoisie accumulated immense wealth at the price of the unheard of sufferings of the African tribes, as well as at the price of endless wars with those states who were

England's rivals in the slave trade. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century trading capital developed its activity chiefly in the Atlantic basin. All the great powers whose shores were washed by the waves of the Atlantic—England, Holland, France, Spain and Portugal—struggled among themselves for domination in this huge basin surrounded by three continents, Europe, Africa and America.

This period saw the bourgeois revolution in England. In 1642-1648 the English town bourgeoisie, in alliance with the more progressive portion of the aristocracy interested in trade, and with the active support of the peasants and plebian elements in the towns who flocked into the revolutionary armies, made a final settlement of accounts with feudalism. The bourgeois revolution and the dictatorship of Cromwell, clearing the road for the free development of capitalism, gave England a great advantage over her rivals. Only Holland had anything like a similarly developed bourgeoisie, but the Dutch burgher preferred to put his money into trade rather than production, and proved weaker than his English neighbour. Cromwell began a series of naval wars which ended in the final defeat of Holland.

The aggressive bourgeois dictatorship of Cromwell allowed the English to colonise the chief islands of the West Indies, and to strengthen and develop their colonies on the east coast of North America. Then with terrible cruelty Ireland was overrun and the armies of the revolutionary bourgeoisie massacred the population of whole cities without distinction of age or sex. On the West coast of Africa the number of trading posts for the slave trade was considerably increased.

Having successfully defeated its internal enemy (feudalism), the English bourgeoisie greedily turned to the winning of new markets and such territories as would give them valuable luxury and food products. From America the English imported food, furs, tobacco, rice; from the West Indies, sugar; from Africa, black slaves for work on the American and West Indian plantations. Ireland the English divided into great estates, which were given over to English landlords, while the ruined and landless peasantry was left to die of hunger. Nor did Cromwell forget to provide for his army. Many of his soldiers were settled as "colonists" on the stolen lands of the Irish peasants, while with inexorable class justice the most revolutionary wing of the army, recruited from the peasantry and town poor, the "Levellers" and "Diggers," was transported as slaves to the West Indies and America.

The Conquest of India

Trade with the East had begun in 1600, when a company of "merchant adventurers" was formed with the right to a trading monopoly with India and those countries of the distant East which were still at this time unknown On the west coast of India in Surat and other places, "factories" or trading posts were founded and began trading with the great nobles and the Indian princes At this time there could be no question of turning India into a colony as the country was still strong enough to give a powerful rebuff to any foreign intervention

In India the English merchants quickly began to fight against the Portugese and Dutch merchants, who were also trading with that country,—the struggle was carried on by the most refined methods of arson and massacre on both sides, and every effort was made to draw the great Indian nobles into these rivalries. In 1685 the Indian government declared war on the East India Company and shut down the greater part of its factories. But the company nevertheless managed to enlarge its activities and founded new trading posts and ports, including the port of Calcutta, later to have such a tremendous importance Still, at the end of the seventeenth century, the possessions of the English in India were negligible, a few square miles in all It is true, however, two of the greatest ports, Bombay and Calcutta, were in the company's hands, and the trade which was carried on through them brought very big profits, so that the shareholders were already beginning to become enormously rich.

The development of money economy during the seventeenth century and the going over in many provinces to paying the land tax in silver instead of in kind, brought a terrible crisis of Indian economy. During the century the land tax almost doubled, the power of merchants and money-lenders swiftly grew The Indian peasants and artisans, pressed on all sides, were ruined The penetration of foreign trading capital opening India to the world market, only increased the general anarchy which reigned in the seventeenth century in Indian feudal society.

The feudal empire of the Moguls began to break up before the rise of powerful rivals, such as the Mahratta Confederacy, while peasant risings, of which the most important was the great Sikh revolt, shook it still further. The English understood wonderfully how to use this situation for their own interests, and along with the internal struggle which was shaking and

breaking the Indian feudal State, there began a stern war between England and France for supremacy in India. The officials and officers of the East India Company with great skill made use of the principle, "divide and conquer," a principle which, as Marx has said, was afterwards to lie at the basis of all English policy. The French appeared in India too late to be victorious, especially as they were without the experience of *a bourgeois revolution and without the full support of a bourgeois state*, two advantages which gave the English the supremacy over their rivals. By 1815 the greater part of India had become an English colony.

The conquest of India by the armies of the East India Company acting on behalf of the British bourgeoisie, deepened a hundred-fold the existing anarchy and confusion. This was not, of course, the first conquest of India, the first period of anarchy. India had been conquered many times before. But this conquest differed from all those preceding in that it was made by a people possessing a higher civilisation, based on a higher system of production than Asiatic feudalism. The effect of the English conquest was the brutal destruction of the economic basis of Indian society, the age-old village community, while all the feudal methods of exploitation which still existed were retained by the conqueror. The particular role of the East India Company was that of carrying out this destruction, of enriching the English bourgeoisie, without any corresponding development of productive forces in India. Nevertheless, the company, the agent of the English bourgeoisie, was responsible, in spite of all its atrocities, for a *revolution* in Indian society.

Marx thus describes this revolution, the destruction of the economic unit of Indian society, the village community:

"These small stereotyped forms of social organism have been for the greater part dissolved and are disappearing, not so much through the brutal interference of the British tax-gatherer and the British soldiers, as due to the working of English steam and English free trade. Those family communities were based on domestic industry, in that peculiar combination of hand weaving, hand spinning and hand tilling agriculture which gave them self-supporting power. English interference having placed the spinner in Lancashire and the weaver in Bengal, or sweeping away both Hindu spinner and weaver, dissolved these small semi-barbarian, semi-civilised communities, by blowing out their economical truth, the only *social* revolution ever heard of in Asia. England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Hindustan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was

stupid in her manner of enforcing them But this is not the question The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution" (*New York Tribune*, June 25th, 1853).

The "Revolution" in Indian Society

The revolution in question was the introduction of Western capitalism into this feudal Eastern society, with all its immense implications, the destruction of old social forms, the creation of new classes It is to this that the apologists of British rule refer when they talk of the "civilising" role played by Britain in India They mean the factories, the harbours and railways, the metalled roads and modern irrigation works, the schools and universities, the law courts and the centralised police force They are right in so far as these things definitely represent a higher, more progressive social system than feudalism They are wrong in so far, as we shall see further in this book, as this progress is limited, is confined in unnatural conditions and limitations In other words, capitalism in colonial conditions, when a feudal exploitation of the peasantry is maintained and industrialisation is artificially limited, has very few of the progressive features which at one time distinguished the rise of capitalism in the west Though it is revolutionary in its creation of new classes, new needs, in its centralising work, its establishment of "order" (i e, the necessary condition for capitalist development), its mite of progress is accomplished at the cost of blood and suffering almost unparalleled in human history.

So that Marx is right in emphasising that this social revolution, this bringing of Asia into the sphere of world market relations and forcibly breaking down its old economy, was only accomplished by means of robbery and slaughter The policy of the East India Company in Bengal and elsewhere in the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century was one of pure robbery, of simply exporting from India all the wealth they could lay hands on, creating nothing in return The peasant was plundered and tortured by the Company's tax collectors, the old feudal nobility was robbed and sometimes murdered by the higher officials, the Clives and Hastings The plunder of India brought enormous profit to the Company and along with the African slave trade formed one of the fundamental

sources of enrichment of the British bourgeoisie, helping it to carry through the industrial revolution and build up modern capitalist factory production in England.

At the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, having vanquished France, the English set about the organisation of their new colony in India, reorganising the whole landed system so that the direct exploitation of the peasant masses might be in the hands of the British Government and its agents. No better description of these "agrarian revolutions" than that given by Marx in his articles in the *New York Tribune* has ever been made, so we reproduce it here in full:

"The great bulk of the revenue is derived from the land. As the various kinds of Indian land-tenure have recently been described in so many places, and in popular style too, I propose to limit my observations on the subject to a few general remarks on the Zemindaree and Ryotwar system.

"The Zemindaree and the Ryotwar were both of them agrarian revolutions effected by British ukases, and opposed to each other; the one aristocratic, the other democratic; the one a caricature of English landlordism, the other of French peasant-proprietorship but pernicious, both combining the most contradictory character—both made not for the people, who cultivate the soil, nor for the holder, who owns it, but for the Government that taxes it.

"By the Zemindaree system, the people of the Presidency of Bengal were depossessed at once of their hereditary claims to the soil, in favour of the native tax-gatherers called *Zemindars*. By the Ryotwar system introduced into the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay, the native nobility, with their territorial claims, merassees, jagheers, etc., were reduced with the common people to the holding of minute fields, cultivated by themselves in favour of the Collector of the East India Company. But a curious sort of English landlord was the Zemindar, receiving only one-tenth of the rent while he had to make over nine-tenths of it to the Government. A curious sort of French peasant was the ryot, without any permanent title in the soil, and with the taxation changing every year in proportion to his harvest. The original class of Zemindars, notwithstanding their unmitigated and uncontrolled rapacity against the depossessed mass of the ex-hereditary landholders, soon melted away under the pressure of the Company, in order to be replaced by mercantile speculators who now hold all the land of Bengal, with exception of the estates returned under the direct management of the Government. These speculators have introduced a variety of the Zemindaree tenure called *patree*. Not content to be placed with regard to the British Government in the situation of middle-

men, they have created in their turn a class of "hereditary" middlemen called *palnetas*, who created again their sub palnetas, etc, so that a perfect scale of hierarchy of middlemen has sprung up, which presses with its entire weight on the unfortunate cultivator As to the ryots in Madras and Bombay, the system soon degenerated into one of forced cultivation, the land lost all its value 'The land,' says Mr Campbell, 'would be sold for balances by the Collector, as in Bengal, but generally is not, for a very good reason, viz, that nobody will buy it'

"Thus, in Bengal, we have a combination of English landlordism, of the *Irish middlemen system*, of the Austrian system, transforming the landlord into the tax gatherer, and of the Asiatic system making the State the real landlord In Madras and Bombay we have a French peasant proprietor who is at the same time a serf, and a *metayer* of the State The drawbacks of all these various sytems accumulate upon him without his enjoying any of their redeeming features The ryot is subject, like the French peasant, to the extortion of the private usurer, but he has no hereditary, no permanent title to his land, like the French peasant Like the serf he is forced to cultivation, but he is not secured against want like the serf Like the *metayer* he has to divide his produce with the State, but the State is not obliged, with regard to him, to advance the funds and the stock, as it is obliged to do so with regard to the *metayer* In Bengal, as in Madras and Bombay, under the *Zemindaree* as under the ryotwar, the ryots—and they form eleven twelfths of the whole Indian population—have been wretchedly pauperised, and if they are, morally speaking, not sunk as low as the Irish cottiers, they owe it to their climate, the men of the South being possessed of less wants, and of more imagination than the men of the North" (*New York Tribune*, August 5th, 1853)

To sum up, therefore, the English destroyed the old Indian feudal landed system, expropriated the old landlords, but far from liberating the peasantry from feudalism, as agrarian revolutions carried through in capitalist countries have liberated them, or at worst turned them into wage labourers working on a landlord's estate, they bound the Indian peasantry to an even worse serfdom, at the same time crushing down a great number of the old landlords to the same position This landed system, the creation of the old East India Company, remains in force over a great part of India to this day Such changes as have been made, as for example the creation of a new form of "peasant proprietorship" in the Punjab will be dealt with later

Every year the East India Company exported to England great sums in bullion, the fruits of the exploitation of the Indian masses. These great sums all went into the pockets of the shareholders or for the upkeep of the huge bureaucracy in London, for the pensions of the civil servants, the training of officers, for the army which the Company kept up in India.

The Chartered Monopolies

Monopoly trading companies, of which the most powerful was the East India Company, were the foundation of English colonial policy in the first period of the country's capitalist development. These companies were given a monopoly of the trade in the various colonies and had the full support of the Government which even allowed them to keep up their own army and fleet.

From the point of view of the English Government, the colonies were simply objects for undisguised looting, a point of view which even applied to such colonies as were settled almost entirely by English people as, for example, North America. The English Government did not allow the English colonies to found any industrial enterprises and forbade them to carry on trade with any other countries. The English colonists in America were compelled to export all their goods to England, in English ships, and in addition had to pay tremendous taxes to the home Government. This repression of the rising bourbeoisie of the young American colony, whose free inner market and unlimited opportunities for capitalist expansion into the unexplored west, gave them unusual strength, caused the American revolution of 1776, when after a military victory over the English troops, the republic of the United States of America was proclaimed.

The English capitalists drew a useful lesson from the American revolution. In those colonies founded by emigration of surplus population from England, where capitalist production relations were reproduced by the colonists from the home country, the possibility of capitalist development was henceforth granted to the colonial bourgeoisie. But in the colonies where the English ruled over great alien populations, the feudal pre-capitalist forms of exploitation were strengthened, the enslavement of the masses made more absolute, and the road of free capitalist development blocked to the native bourgeoisie.

Serious blow though the loss of the American colonies was, it was compensated by the conquest of India. In conclusion, it can be said that English colonial policy in its first period,

roughly from 1600 to 1800, was a purely plundering robber policy, in the plainest sense of these words. The colonies were looked upon simply as a source from which valuable products and luxury goods could be squeezed out, as a means of swift enrichment of the English merchant class. Marx thus sums up the essence of the colonial system in this first period of primary accumulation of capitalism:

" Under the influence of the colonial system, commerce and navigation ripened like hot-house fruit. Chartered companies were powerful instruments in promoting the concentration of capital. The colonies provided a market for the rising manufactures and the monopoly of this market intensified accumulation. The treasures obtained outside Europe by direct looting, enslavement and murder, flowed to the Motherland in streams, and were there turned into capital. . . . To-day, industrial supremacy implies commercial supremacy. In the period of manufacture properly so-called, on the other hand, it was commercial supremacy which implied industrial supremacy. Hence the preponderant role of the colonial system in those days. That system was a 'strange god' who had mounted the altar cheek by jowl with the old gods of Europe, and who, one fine day, with a shove and a kick swept them all into the dustbin. The new god proclaimed the making of surplus value to be the sole end and aim of mankind " (*Capital*, Vol. i, p. 835-836).

In other words, capitalism, in its early, mercantile stage, plundered the feudal states of the East, in order, having developed on the booty a lusty industrialism, to settle accounts later with the much stronger feudalism of the West.

CHAPTER II

COLONIAL POLICY IN THE PERIOD OF INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM, 1815-1895

The New Colonial Policy

The coming of the epoch of industrial capitalism brought with it a new colonial policy. The industrial revolution in England which created modern capitalist society can be dated as beginning approximately from 1760, and the process of capitalist industrialisation of the country in its general features was completed about 1850. During this period the new industrial capitalist class, seeking to get political power into its hands, fought against the ruling alliance of landlords and trading capital. The old system of protection had to give way to the new principle of free trade, the monopoly companies were abolished and free competition took their place.

England became a country with a world monopoly of industrial production so that other countries were forced to buy their industrial products from her, and the transfer to a free trade policy was dictated by the essential interests of the English bourgeoisie. England was now to become the "workshop of the world," marketing its goods without let or hindrance in every country, and drawing from them in return food and raw materials, a position of affairs which lasted without change approximately up to 1870.

The British Empire continued to expand, chiefly in Africa and India. In 1814 the English conquered Cape Colony; in 1843 Natal became an English colony and in 1849 the South African Dutch Republic of the Orange River was seized by force from the Dutch farmers, although a few years later they in their turn won a temporary freedom from British rule. English dominion strengthened and expanded, in India especially. In 1843 Sind was made a part of the British possessions, and the two wars against the Sikhs of the Punjab ended with the conquest of this rich agricultural region. A war with Burma led to the seizure of that country in 1852. The English

Viceroy, Lord Dalhousie, 1849 1856, seized the lands of a number of Indian princes in Oudh, Berar, and elsewhere, which were to prove extremely valuable for the cultivation of cotton

A series of semi piratical raids established the English in the Malay Peninsula and on the island of Sarawak, while in 1841 the Chinese were forced to open their ports for the trade in opium exported from India by the East India Company, and as "compensation" for refusing to accept this "gift" of a poisonous drug from the English, had to give up the island of Hongkong which dominates the great port of Canton

The official policy of the British bourgeoisie in this period was for peace at any price and against colonial expansion The prophets of Manchester, Bright and Cobden, inveighed at length against the policy of colonial conquest on the grounds that it unnecessarily raised the costs of production Disraeli, the first hero of imperialism, declared the colonies to be "mill stones round our necks" Nevertheless, Bright and Cobden earnestly supported the bloody suppression of the Indian mutiny in 1857, and Disraeli became the idol of the bourgeoisie because of his "forward' policy against Russia in defence of India Marx thus characterises with biting scorn, the policy of the radical bourgeoisie at this time

"The slogan of this Party in its fight against the old English institutions—those products of a worn out, rapidly vanishing into the past, period of social development—is '*Produce as cheaply as possible and get rid of all faux frais of production*' The nation can produce and exchange its products with out a king, therefore, down with the king The sinecure of the nobility, the House of Lords—this is all faux frais of pro duction A big standing army—faux frais, colonies—faux frais England can exploit other nations at less expense if it lives at peace with them" (Marx, *New York Tribune*)

As we have seen, however, this did not prevent an extra ordinary rapid expansion of the Empire at this time The hypocritical bourgeoisie of Manchester was able to hide behind the more openly brutal methods of the aristocracy against which it raged in such fine democratic phrases Manchester carried out its own policy of blood and iron against the working class at home Nevertheless, this period sees a great change in the methods of colonial exploitation The former function of the colonies, that of enriching a privileged section of the bour geoisie with their loot, and developing a trade in articles of

luxury, remained, but it became secondary to the new role of the colonies, that of providing a great market for the products of the new industry and an agrarian base for producing its raw materials and cheap food-stuffs for the wage slaves of the English factories. The import of English cotton goods into India destroyed the native manufacturing industry, broke up the old unity of industry and agriculture inside the village community. At the same time the seizure of lands from the feudal princes and big landlords for the cultivation of cotton created discontent among this class, which had formerly been the chief support of English rule. Uncertainty as to the future among the clerical and feudal elements who remembered the expropriations of the last century and saw for a moment the possibility of their complete destruction before this strange and terrible impact of Western industrial civilisation; the complete ruin of the peasantry, forced now to cultivate for the market and no longer for their own petty needs as well as to pay the colossal tribute extorted every year by England, all these things prepared the fertile ground on which broke out the Indian mutiny in 1857.

This great revolt against British Imperialism first started in Bengal and rapidly spread across the northern and central provinces. The revolt, beginning in the Bengal army, had chiefly a military character, though in many places an active part was played in the armed struggle by the town poor and by the peasantry. In general the direction of the revolt was in the hands of feudal and clerical elements, but in the struggle they had the support of the masses of Indian peasantry, even though the peasantry itself as a class did not everywhere rise against British rule. With horrible cruelty the English put down the great revolt.

No discrimination of either age or sex was made by the British troops in their revenge. The burning of villages (with their inhabitants), the blowing of men from the cannon's mouth, mass hangings, floggings, all the forms of vile sadism of which empire builders seem more capable than anyone else, were employed in the repression. One example quoted by Kaye and Malleson, the historians of the mutiny, should be enough.

"Volunteer hanging parties went out into the districts, and amateur executioners were not wanting to the occasion. One gentleman boasted of the numbers he had finished off quite 'in an artistic manner,' with mango trees for gibbets and elephants for drops, the victims of this wild justice being strung up, as though for pastime, in 'the form of a figure of eight.'"

The "Development" of India

In 1858 the East India Company was officially abolished and power over India passed directly into the hands of the English Government. India had passed into the sway of English industrial capitalism which at once began to apply in full its new colonial policy—the so-called policy of "development." Railways were rapidly built in the country but they were constructed not for the development of the productive forces of India but with the aim of facilitating the export trade and for military aims. The railways were built at the expense of the Indian masses, so that money could be spent without stint or shame upon their construction. The English contractors and bond holders drew a large and certain profit from the new railway system, and even the incorruptible Indian civil service made its little pile out of the new "development." An American historian has stated cynically that if the actions of the English civil servants in the railway development of India had been those of American politicians in the opening up of the west, no difficulty whatever would have been found in finding exact words to describe their conduct.

The building of the Indian railways has been praised so often as the greatest achievement of the British, that it is worth while to examine its actual effects with some care. Undoubtedly the Indian railways are excellently organised and have done much, as Marx foretold they would, to help the development of capitalism in the country, thereby undoubtedly playing a highly progressive and revolutionary part. But they have not, and could not have in the circumstances, helped to raise the condition of the masses of the Indian people, the peasants, who remain to this day the poverty-stricken, indebted and suffering millions that they were when the railways were built. The opening up of America by railroad construction helped a nation of free farmers to a long period of prosperity, started the country on its rapid and dazzling rise to the greatest industrial state in the world. In India, a colony in which feudalism was deliberately maintained by force of the conquerors' arms, the growth of railways only served to emphasise the prevailing poverty, as is shown by the 80,000 prosecutions for travelling without a ticket which take place each year. In America the farmers and industrialists joined hands to destroy the feudal and slave society of the southern planters in civil war.

The chief aim of the English in building railways in India was

to connect by a thousand threads of steel the interior of peasant India to the capitalist market and its needs, particularly to the needs of English industry. The railways, the irrigation works, far from improving the position of the peasant made it worse. Forced to cultivate for the market, to produce technical crops, he was no longer able to produce food. He began to need more and more money, not only to pay his water taxes, his increasing land tax, his rent, but in order to buy food for himself and his family, food which he formerly produced himself. The need for money led him to the money-lender. In countries of capitalist agriculture, the production of valuable technical crops leads to the enrichment of at least a section of the peasantry. In the colonial conditions it can only mean further enslavement and pauperisation.

One not unimportant secondary effect of the building of the railways was the destruction of the native transport system of bullock carts. The peasant could no longer rely on his bullocks to supplement his meagre income, rural unemployment increased, and the land suffered from lack of manure as the surplus cattle were got rid of.

The same inefficiency, waste and corruption which characterised the railway construction, marked the development of irrigation. Up to the mutiny, little was done, while the very complicated and efficient native canal system, already damaged by the wars of the eighteenth century, was allowed to fall into final decay. Then followed in the last half of the nineteenth century a period of rapid building of great dams and canals. The expenses were borne by the peasantry in increased land tax and water cesses. The water tax was, and is, an especial burden, since it is not calculated on the basis of water consumed, and falls much more heavily on the poor peasant than the well-to-do. Its effects are shown by the following newspaper report :

LYALLPUR (PUNJAB).

" Five villagers were killed and a number of others injured when a party of six police constables and a sub-inspector fired on a hostile crowd of over a hundred villagers. A constable was hurt. The police had been called in by the canal authorities to settle a water dispute." (*Daily Telegraph*, August 23, 1933).

It may be supposed the dispute is now written down as having been " settled."

Land "Reform" and Famine

In Bengal, where the most valuable crop about the middle of the century was jute (Bengal has a world monopoly of jute), the burden on the peasantry became so great as to deprive them of all inducement to cultivation. In this province the yoke of landlordism (the Zemindars) with its pyramid of sub-landlords, had become almost unbearable, and during the mutiny of 1857 the Bengal peasants came out openly not only against the British but against the Zemindars and their agents. The British were quick to draw the lessons and in 1859 the Bengal Tenancy Act was passed guaranteeing occupancy rights to all tenants who had held their lands for twelve years and forbidding the raising of rents otherwise than by a decision of the courts.

What did the Bengal Tenancy Act and its various successors accomplish? The aim was to develop a capitalist peasantry in Bengal, but in the complicated system of holdings in Bengal the mass of cultivators found it impossible to prove any continuous occupancy rights. Captain Trotter, the well-known historian of the mutiny period, writes of the Act as follows: "Many of those who claimed it (fixity of tenure) were still doomed to feel the difference between a declared right and counting facts. By various forms of evasion and obstruction the Zemindars contrived in very many cases to raise their rents and replenish their purses in defiance of the new law. And they were still free to work their pleasure on the multitudes of rack-rented tenants at will whom the new law left entirely to their own devices" (*India Under Victoria*, Vol. ii, p. 131). A small class of well-to-do peasants was created, but such were the conditions in Bengal that far from this being a step on the road to capitalist development, it only proved a further hindrance, the creation of a new class of parasites sucking the blood of the peasant masses, for the well-to-do peasant soon ceased to be primarily a cultivator, but sub-let his land and became primarily a money-lender and landlord. However, the immediate effect of this "reform" was the rapid increase in jute production in Bengal.

A picture of the Bengal Zemindar is given by Wilfred Blunt in his book, *India under Ripon*. A typical Zemindar whom Blunt knew well and visited, had an annual rent roll of £50,000. But this "strange sort of landlord," as Marx calls him, paid £15,000 a year to a Maharajah who was the real owner of two-thirds of his property, and about £15,000 in taxes to the Government,

leaving him the tidy income of £20,000 a year. This Zemindar had various degrees of sub-tenants under him before the actual cultivator was reached.

Meanwhile, warned by the experience of 1857, the Government carried through with the greatest consistency the policy of support for all the reactionary elements in the country, the native princes, the priests, the landlords, the money-lenders and merchants. Through their help the full surplus product was squeezed after every harvest from the peasant, and by leaving these parasites their share of the plunder the British rulers gained a sure ally inside the country.

So the "development" of India, of which the English so loudly sing the praises, was only a development which corresponded strictly to the plundering aims of English capitalism, and was against the interests of the native masses. Although the English introduced into India the beginnings of capitalist production, carefully controlled, and the dominion of capitalist commodity relations, nevertheless since they kept up all the old feudal forms of exploitation, their development, far from in any way improving the position of the Indian masses, increased their poverty and complete lack of all human rights.

In the middle of the nineteenth century the demands of British industry for raw materials, especially cotton, began to grow extraordinarily quickly: the population of the industrial centres grew rapidly, the agriculture of the metropolis could no longer guarantee a sufficient quantity of cheap food products for the slaves of English capitalism. Moreover, as a consequence of the Civil War of 1861-65 in America, England was for a long time cut off from her chief source of cotton supplies. So a great increase in the sown area of cotton was forced upon India, while the Punjab took the second place in supplying England with wheat. The export of rice and other foodstuffs to England rapidly increased. The English Government and its lackeys, the Indian landlords and money-lenders, by its railways and irrigation canals, by its Tenancy Acts, on the one hand, by the pressure of tax-collector, landlord and money-lender on the other, forced the economy of the Indian peasant to the production of technical export crops and foodstuffs for Britain. The tired poverty-stricken peasant farm could not support such a pressure any longer. Desperate famine began to rage throughout the country.

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The Opening Up of Africa

In 1876, England and France, as the Khedive's chief creditors, appointed financial controllers and took the finances of the Egyptian Government into their own hands. The " rationalisation " of Egyptian finances by the Anglo-French officials quickly ended in the displacement of the Khedive in whose place was set up a puppet of their own. Energetic measures were then taken to collect from the Egyptian peasants the interest due from the Egyptian Government to the Anglo-French creditors. England's chief " expert " in this new robbery was Major Baring of the famous banking firm, afterwards to become celebrated as Lord Cromer. The Egyptian masses, together with the most advanced sections of the landlords and trading bourgeoisie, rose up against this civilised piracy and formed a national government with the officer Arabi Pasha at its head. The English replied with the bombardment of Alexandria, the excuse being the killing of a half-dozen obscure merchants and money-lenders, alleged to be British subjects, by the exasperated crowd in Alexandria. The bombardment of this almost defenceless city by the new Ironclads was followed up by an invasion of the country. At the end of 1882, Arabi Pasha was taken prisoner and barely escaped with his life from the agitation of the murderous-minded British bourgeoisie. After this, Egypt became in fact an English colony, although formally it remained a tributary state of Turkey.

Egypt soon proved to be an extremely valuable acquirement for British imperialism. In the first place, it was essential for the guaranteeing of the safety of the Suez Canal and the route to India. In the second place, the valley of the Nile is one of the best cotton-producing regions in the world, while the great expanses of the Sudan to the south allow the almost unlimited expansion of the cotton area into the very heart of Africa.

In 1883, the peasantry of the Sudan revolted against their Anglo-Egyptian enslavers and drove them out of the country. The rebels, however, were not able to triumph for very long: the English sent a big military expedition to the Sudan and in 1898 it was finally subdued. If the conquest of the Sudan must be attributed to such " blood and iron " imperialists as Kitchener and Salisbury, to the pacific and religious liberal Gladstone belongs the glory of opening the bloody path into Africa from the north by the bombardment of Alexandria and the robber war on the government of Arabi Pasha.

The penetration of England into Africa was concluded by the

end of the 'eighties of the last century. In East and West Africa, British capitalism again went back to the old methods of colonisation which were used in the seventeenth century. The task of conquering vast, hitherto unsubdued territories, and taking over their exploitation was again placed on monopoly chartered companies In 1886 the Royal Niger Company received a trading monopoly and founded great colonies in West Africa, the Gold Coast and Nigeria. In 1888 the exploitation of *East Africa was handed over to the Imperial* British East Africa Company, and in 1889 the British South Africa Company, behind which was the notorious Cecil Rhodes, undertook the exploitation of the area afterwards known as Rhodesia. So the conquest of Africa was carried through to an end by the chartered companies, just as two hundred years before the pirates and adventurers of the East India Company had conquered India

However, the newly acquired territories were exploited by quite other methods The epoch of imperialism, of monopoly capitalism, was already beginning The African monopoly companies of the end of the nineteenth century had nothing in common with the Africa and India companies of the seventeenth and eighteenth Not "trade," but the export of capital and the attainment of vast new sources of raw materials were their aims They were connected in the closest way with the banks and heavy industry of the home country The new colonies had to undergo the most unrestrained exploitation at the hands of the companies At enormous cost harbours were constructed, railways and automobile roads built, the cultivation of important tropical cultures forced ahead, both those which provided products necessary for modern industry, particularly the chemical industry, and those which could give food to the home country—West Africa proving in this connection exceptionally valuable.

The new African colonies became an important and integral part of the British Empire Their government gradually passed from the chartered companies directly to the colonial office, and to the burdens of exploitation carried by the native peasantry were now added the heavy sums necessary for keeping up an imperial administrative apparatus The White Man charges very heavily for bearing his "burden" in the colonies From 1896 to 1928 the trading balance of all the West African colonies increased almost seven times over, whilst the administrative expenses in the same period increased over ten times

Engels, before he died, saw clearly from the growing development of trusts and from such features as the opening up of Africa that capitalism was changing its character, that the colonies and undeveloped areas of the earth were being called upon to play a new and vastly important part in the world system of capitalism. He intended to write for the German Socialist Review, *Neue Zeit*, an article containing his additions to the third volume of Marx's *Capital.* The article was never finished, but in the seventh point of the notes for it, which have recently been published for the first time, we find the following:

"(7) Next colonisation: to-day colonisation is simply a department of the stock exchange in whose interests the European powers, a few years ago, divided up Africa. The French conquered Tunis and Tonkin. Africa has simply been given out on lease to the larger companies (the Niger, South African, German South-West and East African), Mashonaland and Natal have been taken over for the stock exchange by Rhodes."

So Engels, a few months before his death, showed that Marx clearly understood the path of development of capitalism and the role which the so-called backward countries were now to be called upon to play.

Chapter III

IMPERIALISM AND COLONIAL POLICY

New Features in Colonial Policy

By the end of the period of industrial capitalism, that is by the 'nineties of the last century, England had completed the "building" of her Empire. What was the effect on England herself? Having an enormous start over all other countries both in respect of industrialisation and of colonial expansion England developed also much earlier than her rivals strong features of imperialism and a full-blooded imperialist psychology, the psychology of the "civilised" bandit. This feeling that an Englishman was one of the "chosen race" spread even for a considerable time among the working class, particularly among the upper sections of skilled workers and trade union officials.

"Two big distinctive features of imperialism," writes Lenin, "applied to Britain from midway through the nineteenth century: vast colonial possessions and a monopolist position in world markets. Marx and Engels systematically followed over some decades this relation between working-class opportunism and the imperialistic peculiarities of English capitalism. . . . In a letter to Kautsky of the 12th September, 1882, Engels wrote: 'You ask me what the English workers think of colonial policy? The same thing as they think about politics in general. There is no working-class party here, there are only conservatives and liberal radicals, and the workers very quietly enjoy together with them the fruits of the British colonial monopoly and of the British monopoly of the world market.' Engels set forth these ideas for the general public in his preface to the second edition of *The Conditions of the English Working Class*, which appeared in 1882. Here he clearly points out causes and effects. The causes are: (1) The exploitation of the whole world by this country; (2) Its monopolistic position in the world market; (3) Its colonial monopoly. The effects are: (1) The transformation of a section of the British workers into the middle class; (2) The opportunity of leading it which part of the working class affords to a section corrupted by the capitalist class, or at least paid by it" (Lenin, *Imperialism*, p. 118-119).

With the coming of the epoch of imperialism great changes nevertheless took place in English colonial policy. The development of new and powerful industries, their ever-increasing concentration, the enormous growth of finance capital and particularly the development of capital export, all these things put the colonies into a new relationship to the metropolis.

The tin and rubber of the Malay Archipelago, the vegetable oil of West Africa, the hides and manganese of India, were now added to the cotton, jute, corn, tea, tobacco, rice and other products of mass consumption which gave their chief importance to the colonies in the middle of the nineteenth century. But now in particular the colonies acquired importance as a field for the export of capital. In the last decade of the nineteenth century a truly lightning growth took place in the network of Indian railways. In 1898 Kitchener's army carried the first great railway into the Sudan as far as Khartoum, and by the end of the nineteenth century every one of the new African colonies had its first railway. Simultaneously in all the new colonies irrigation works were carried on, dams built across rivers, seaports constructed, roads laid, and all these immense works were financed by yearly loans issued in London, the fat interest on which the colonial peasant was destined to pay.

Export of capital was to become now the most important of all the British exports. In 1881 the amount of English capital invested abroad was estimated at £1,250 millions, bringing in an annual revenue of £52 millions. In 1915 the investments abroad were £3,808 millions and the revenue £200 millions. The share of the Empire in this was roughly half. In 1896, [illegible] millions were invested in the Empire, 53 per cent. of the [illegible] in 1915, £1,800 millions, 50 per cent. of the whole. [illegible] investments of the English bourgeoisie in India in [illegible] millions according to some calculations, according [illegible] £[illegible] millions. In 1929, C[illegible]hill in his [illegible] House of Commons estim[illegible] an[illegible] [illegible] subjects from foreign [illegible]

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hinder it, it took place, even attracting a certain amount of British capital The chief market of the Bombay cotton industry was not India itself but Japan and China After cotton the next largest industry was jute, almost entirely in the hands of British capitalists In the development of this industry, a decisive factor was the desire to make use of cheap labour power and prolonged working hours in conjunction with closeness to the source of raw material, which in the case of jute is a complete monopoly of India The cotton industry in particular was forced to put up with every kind of difficulty to prevent its development on equal terms with Lancashire Not only were the Indian manufacturers not allowed to protect their young industry by a tariff, but for very many years were even compelled to pay an excise on all yarn produced in their mills Manipulation of the rupee exchange by the English Government was also employed to put the weak Indian capitalists at a decisive disadvantage

India has none of the marks of an industrial country, particularly India produces none of the means of production itself Railway repair shops, weakly developed coal-fields, one very large iron and steel works, the Tata mills at Jamshedpur developed by Indian capital, but now including big British and American interests, and two much smaller works owned by British capital, a handful of very small machine tool shops, the essential minimum necessary from the military point of view, an American owned automobile assembling plant and a few kerosene cleaning factories make the sum total of India's heavy industry A considerable portion even of this minute whole was developed during the war when England had to keep up from India huge armies in the Middle East Apart from jute and cotton textiles, whatever other forms of industry exist in India are merely those plants and mills which are essential for the first working up of her agricultural products, sugar factories, rice husking factories, tea and tobacco factores, a small woollen and worsted industry

The development of industry in the colonies is described in the Colonial Theses of the sixth World Congress of the Comintern in words which apply with absolute truth to India

> " Only where manufacture constitutes a very simple process (tobacco industry, sugar refineries, etc) or where the expense of transporting raw material can be considerably decreased by the first stage of manufacture being performed on the spot, does the development of production in the colonies attain comparatively

large dimensions. In any case, the capitalist enterprises created by the imperialists in the colonies (with the exception of a few enterprises established in case of military needs) are predominantly or exclusively of an agrarian-capitalist character and are distinguished by a low organic composition of capital" (p. 14).

Colonial Policy and War

India was and still remains England's most important base for the investment of capital among the actual colonial countries of the Empire, as distinguished from the dominions, but the other colonies in this respect have presented a by no means negligible field for the capitalists of the metropolis. Tremendous sums have been invested in the cotton plantations of the Sudan, the rubber plantations of Malaya, in the cotton, coffee and fibre plantations of East Africa. In addition we must not leave out of account the fact that English heavy industry has reaped and is reaping colossal profits thanks to the heavy expenditure of the Government on naval and military armaments necessary for defending the Empire against external enemies as well as for suppressing any revolt among the exploited millions of colonial peasantry. In the period before the war it was the rivalry of German and British imperialism which was the cause of great developments in naval technique, the building of costly warships of entirely new type, as well as the fortifying of coaling stations and bases for the fleet along the sea routes of the whole world.

England, however, was not destined to keep the start which she had gained over all other countries. The very possession of this huge colonial empire, the great sums of tribute which were wrung from it every year to pay into the pockets of the English investors at home, was creating conditions preventing England from keeping the industrial lead which she had won so easily in the nineteenth century. Parasitism was becoming a deadly growth on the productive forces of the metropolis. Although in some sections of industry Britain continued to forge ahead, in others definite decay set in, whilst in others still the situation was one of stagnation. Long before 1914 both Germany and the United States were far ahead of England in the most important heavy industries, with the exception of coal.

This fact that England was entering into a period of stagnation and relative decline, while other countries such as Germany, Japan, the United States, were leaping ahead, was

bound to lead to war England had a monopoly of the unexploited and backward areas of the world, which was becoming a hindrance to the further progress of more vigorous imperialisms Out of this unequal development of capitalism in the period of imperialism grow wars "There can be no other conceivable basis, under capitalism, for the sharing out of spheres of influence, of interest, of colonies, etc , than a calculation of the strength of the participants, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc And strength among them is constantly varying, for there cannot be, under capitalism, an *equal* development of different undertakings, trusts, branches of industry or countries " (Lenin, *Imperialism*, p 132)

The period from 1900 to 1914 was a period of preparing for the inevitable struggle between British and German imperialism for the redivision of the world The struggle between England and Germany grew out of this unequal development of capitalism making war inevitable, and in turn, preparing for the development of new wars "It is well known," Comrade Stalin said at the fifteenth Party Conference, "that until comparatively recently England was ahead of all other imperialist powers It is well known also how Germany afterwards began to overtake England, demanding for itself 'a place in the sun' at the expense of other states and above all at the expense of England It is well known that the imperialist war of 1914-1918 broke out precisely in connection with this circumstance "

England emerged from the war victorious, with a great increase in the territory of her colonial Empire won at the expense of her conquered rival The greater part of the German colonies in Africa and the Pacific passed to England while England also got the lion's share out of the dividing up of the Turkish Empire in Asia, receiving Palestine, Trans Jordania and Irak as mandated territories from the League of Nations Thus a whole new great nationality, the Arabs, practically came under the domination of British imperialism In the newly occupied Arab countries, England at once carried out the old well tried policy of alliance with the feudal elements, while in those Arab territories which still remained nominally independent, such as the Hedjaz and Nejd, a whole series of intrigues was employed to buy over their rulers to the service of British imperialism Irak and Trans Jordania were forced by British bayonets to accept Arab kings chosen for them by their new masters In Palestine a different policy was tried On the one hand the Arab feudal landlords were favoured, while

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on the other a new Jewish bourgeoisie was imported into the country.

These new colonies were acquired by British imperialism at the price of the lives of well over a million workers and peasants from Britain, India, Ireland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa. To them must be added the lives of hundreds of thousands of African negroes and Chinese coolies worked to death or slaughtered as uniformed slaves in the labour battalions, the prey of every possible war epidemic as well as the shells and air bombs of the Germans. How many died in this way it is impossible to say, for the imperialist government did not waste money on compiling statistics of dead, sick and wounded Chinese and negroes in the labour battalions, since these unfortunates were not looked upon as human beings at all, but merely as human machines for digging trenches, carrying loads and building base camps.

The Colonies and the Crisis of Capitalism

The war of 1914-1918, the result of imperialist antagonisms arising from the unequal development of capitalism, was the beginning of the general crisis of capitalism, which had a particularly deep reaction on the British Empire. England emerged from the war only a formal " victor," its economy shaken and entering a period of permanent stagnation and decline. Particularly were the great export industries of England hit by this crisis, falling production, an ever-increasing army of unemployed and declining exports become the characteristic features of post-war British economy.

But England, though weakened by the war, emerged with an even larger colonial empire. The colonial monopoly of British imperialism had been strengthened while its economic base had been weakened. At the same time, Germany's place as a rival for world domination was taken by another more powerful, equally aggressive imperialism, the United States of America, against whom the British bourgeoisie must now defend their colonial monopoly to the death. The contradiction between British and American imperialism, the deepening of the unequal development of capitalism is now inevitably leading to another war for the redivision of the world.

Not merely in these deepening imperialist antagonisms, however, does the general crisis of capitalism find its strongest expression, but in the fact that capitalism no longer represents the sole and all-embracing system of world economy. Along-

side capitalism now exists socialism, exposing all the rottenness of capitalism, shaking its very foundations. The victory of the proletariat in Russia in 1917 in alliance with the peasantry, smashing Tsarist imperialism, liberating the oppressed millions of the Tsarist colonies, stirred the toiling masses of the colonies and semi-colonies of the whole world. The peoples of the "backward" countries, the overwhelming millions of India and China, are awakening to political life and becoming "an active factor of world history and the revolutionary destruction of imperialism" (Lenin, *Theses on Tactics*, Third Congress, C.I.).

At the same time as the contradictions between capitalist countries sharpen and grow, as the imperialists are preparing a new slaughter for redivision of the world, for dominion in the colonies, in the colonies themselves the revolutionary movement grows and broadens. Fresh forces are being drawn into this movement, forces of revolt against colonial exploitation and imperialist slavery. Up to the world war the national-revolutionary movement in the British Empire was strongest of all in India and Egypt. Under the influence of the victory of the proletarian revolution in the former Tsarist Empire it has spread to all the colonial countries, and become an armed struggle against imperialism and its lackeys, the bourgeois-feudal alliance. In India from 1919-1922, in Egypt in 1919, 1923-1924, in Irak in 1922, in Palestine and West Africa in 1929, and again in India since 1930, up to the present moment, heroic battles of the proletariat and peasantry of the colonies have taken place against the armed forces of British imperialism.

With the growth of the revolutionary consciousness of the colonial masses and with the deepening of the economic crisis, especially the agrarian crisis in the capitalist world, the heavier becomes the yoke of imperialism in the colonies, the crueller and the more merciless is its White Terror. On the other hand, the struggle against it not only does not die down but grows deeper and wider, bringing in under the leadership of the working-class ever newer and greater masses of peasantry and petty bourgeoisie. In this revolutionising process the victories of socialist construction, particularly the socialist reconstruction of the countryside, play a leading role. The influence of the victory of the October revolution has become a factor of inestimable importance in the colonies and semi-colonies.

Chapter IV

BRITISH POLICY IN INDIA

India's place in the Empire

India, with its population of 352 millions and area of 1,805,332 square miles, easily occupies the first place in importance in the Empire, and quite naturally, by virtue of that place, plays a leading part in British politics. India has a large and valuable external trade which even in 1931-32, the second year of economic crisis, reached £120 millions for exports and £92 millions imports. There has always been a great excess of exports over imports in India's trade balance, averaging about £62 millions a year in the decade 1920-30. That balance has now almost disappeared due to the crisis, but it is maintained by the enormous forced exports of gold and silver.

The chief exports are cotton, jute, grains, vegetable oil seeds, tea, leather and hides. India imports the most valuable products of English industry, machines, metal goods, oil, railway equipment, automobiles, the products of the chemical and paper industry. Of particular importance to Great Britain are India's imports of cotton textiles. Before the war about half Britain's cotton export went to India. Since the war this has fallen considerably, but even so as late as 1928 India still took almost 40 per cent. of England's cotton export.

But India exports to England not only agricultural products and industrial raw materials; every year she exports huge sums of money to pay the interest on the endless loans for the "development" of India, for the payment of wages of the English administrators and garrison, for war materials, for pensions and leave allowances to officers of the army and civil service. The sum exported in this way, it is difficult to establish in exact figures. In the 'nineties of the last century, English politicians fixed it at about £15 millions a year. At present it is not less than £35 millions a year. Such is the annual tribute paid by India to British imperialism. The increase in this tribute shows that during the epoch of imperialism the colonial

dependence of India on England has considerably increased in spite of all the sham " reforms " and " legislative assemblies " which have been set up.

In a letter to the Russian economist, Danielson, of the 11th February, 1881, Marx thus sharply characterises the annual tribute which India pays to England :

" What the English take from them (the Indians) annually in the form of rent, dividends for railways, useless to the Hindus, pensions for military and civil service men, for Afghanistan and other wars, etc., etc.—what they take from them without *any equivalent* and *quite apart* from what they appropriate for themselves annually, *within* India—speaking only of the *value of the commodities*, the Indians have *gratuitously* and annually to send o[illegible]
tl[illegible]
T[illegible]

Formally, very far from the whole of India is under the direct rule of the British. Of the whole area of India, equal to 1,805,332 square miles, about 711 thousand square miles are the territory of the native princes, " tributaries " of the British Empire. These so-called native states have a population of 81 millions. The native states live in conditions of complete mediæval feudalism without any industry, practically no hospital or medical services, even on the extremely modest scale in which these exist over the rest of India, while the peasantry are exploited with the savage cruelty characteristic of the Middle Ages. The peasants are mercilessly squeezed to pay for the upkeep of the luxurious princely courts, the harems, the armies, the annual tribute to the British Government, the racehorses of the Rajah, his trips to Europe and his innumerable mistresses of the French and English demi-monde. Sometimes, as in the case of the notorious Maharajah of Kashmir, the peasant not only has to pay for the debauches of his ruler, but also for the blackmail extracted from him afterwards. The feudal princes, needless to say, are one of the strongest supports of the English rule in India and have the unchanging goodwill of the imperialist bureaucracy.

Mr. Fenner Brockway, in his book, *The Indian Crisis*, gives the following illuminating analysis of the budget of the State of Bikaner, whose ruler has been appointed by the British Government one of the Indian delegates to the League of Nations Assembly :

	Rupees	
Civil List	1,255,000	(£94,125)
Wedding of the Prince .	825,000	(£61,875)
Buildings and Roads .	618,384	(£46,378)
Extension of Royal Palace .	426,614	(£31,996)
Royal Family	224,865	(£18,364)
Education	222,979	(£16,723)
Medical Services . .	188,138	(£14,110)
Public Utility Works .	30,761	(£2,307)
Sanitation	5,729	(£429)

The Indian Peasantry

Speaking to the Agricultural Conference at Simla, 1926, Lord Irwin pointed out that over 71 per cent. of the population of India are entirely dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. This great mass of peasantry lives and works in conditions of most horrible poverty and savage exploitation. It has already been related above how in certain provinces, Oudh, Bengal, the United Provinces, the English created a class of wealthy native landlords, the Zemindars. It is the exception for a Zemindar himself to have anything to do directly with agriculture. Usually between the Zemindar and the peasant who works his land for him, there is a chain of not less than 10 sub-tenants. Each of these naturally takes for himself his share of the product of the peasants' labour, while above them all stands the government, which in the shape of the land tax takes from the peasant through the Zemindar well over 20 per cent. of his real income.

Of the other forms of Indian land-holding the two most widely spread are the so-called Riotwari tenure, according to which the peasants rents his land directly from the Government and pays his tax directly to the Government tax collector, and the so-called village system, according to which the village as a whole is assessed for tax to the Government. The Riotwari districts, though once they represented "a caricature of the French system of peasant proprietorship" (Marx), have long ago lost what slight resemblance to that system they ever possessed. Between the cultivating peasant and the State there has grown up a whole heirarchy of intermediaries, money-lenders and merchants, rich f[illegible]rmers and landlords, who squeeze the last drop of blood [illegible] half-st[illegible]rved peasant. The village system is a bar[illegible] l[illegible] [illegible]stem, differing from the Zemind[illegible] [illegible] of the land

tax is not fixed permanently and undergoes frequent changes, usually in an upward direction, and that the Government appears more directly as an oppressor.

Not only is the peasant completely dependent on the money-lender, to whom he has to pledge his harvest, in order that he may pay his land tax in time, but the village craftsmen is also in his grip. The craftsman, ruined by the competition of cheap factory goods, is forced to borrow in order that he may be able to carry on his trade. Even if he throws it up only a slow death from starvation awaits him. In the villages there is as a rule no free land which he could occupy and work since the vast resources of India in land are either in Government hands as forest reserves, or uncultivated through lack of water. Nor does he have the outlet which exists for his European counterpart of going and hiring himself as a wage labourer in the towns, for in India industry is too weakly developed to be able to give work to more than a negligible per cent. of the expropriated peasantry and artisans.

So great is the yoke of the money-lender on the Indian peasant that in many cases, in order to pay his debts, the peasant is forced to become the actual slave of his creditor. The number of such debt slaves is difficult to establish exactly, for the English Government, while compelled to admit their existence, is chary of giving statistical exactness to the extent of slavery existing in India. However, the number of debt slaves may be estimated at roughly about *six millions.* The most terrible feature of this form of slavery is that it is hereditary, the children of the debtor remaining in slavery until the debt is paid off, which in Indian conditions is practically equivalent to eternity.

The power of the money-lender in the Indian village is openly admitted by the English themselves. " If it were not for the money-lender the Government would never collect the taxes," declared an official of the Bombay Presidency before the Royal Commission on Agriculture. In the overwhelming majority of cases, the Indian peasant never even sees the product of his own labour. The moment his harvest is gathered it goes to the money-lender, who then makes him an advance until the next harvest. Even where the peasant produces directly for the world market, as in the cotton districts, the same rule holds good. The very few who are able to sell directly on the market have to sell to middle men who make 20 to 30 per cent. profit on the peasant's produce. In certain districts, as in the Punjab, it is forbidden to sell land to non-agriculturists, but here the

money-lender finds no difficulty in acquiring a piece of land and thus becoming an "agriculturist," and the position remains unchanged.

It is this all-powerful grip of landlord, money-lender and merchant on the Indian peasant which is the *condition* of imperialist rule, the fundamental *colonial* feature of the Indian village, that condemns Indian agriculture to perpetual decay, and the peasant to starvation and ruin. Even in times when agricultural prices are high, when the capitalist farmer grows rich, the colonial peasant feels little difference in his lot, because the value of his produce never comes back to him in the smallest degree. Indeed, a rise in prices, in certain conditions, may even prove fatal to him. This was the case during the imperialist war, when the rise in all prices, in food as well as in town products drove the Indian peasant into one of the greatest famines in history, exacting a toll of 12 million lives. At the time, the imperialists with a mistaken and sardonic sense of humour, euphemistically referred to this catastrophe as an "influenza epidemic." The real facts are now openly admitted.

The burden of debt which the peasantry can never shake off under British rule, combined with the ruin of the village handicraftsmen, has caused a very great cutting-down of the areas of the peasant allotments. In Bombay, a typical Riotwari province, 48 per cent., that is almost half of all the peasant holdings, are less than 5 acres each, and 88 per cent. of the holdings are under 25 acres. In the Punjab a quarter of all the sown area is in the hands of 3.7 per cent. of all the tenants, while 60 per cent. of the population rents holdings of under 5 acres. Such a minute sub-division hastens the process of complete pauperisation, so that great masses of people are all the time on the verge of starvation and extinction. Despite this extreme subdivision of the land, the number of ruined peasants and unemployed village artisans swells yearly, and the army of labourers has grown from 21.6 millions in 1921, to 31.4 millions in 1931. Very few of these find enough work to keep themselves and their families alive, and they go to swell the host of beggars which swarms over India, or, the more desperate of them, the gangs of "dacoits," as bandits are called.

The report of the Government Health Department on the population of Bengal for 1927 had to admit that:

"The Bengal peasantry feed so badly that even rats could not live longer than five weeks on such a diet. The population is so terribly weakened that it is quite incapable of resisting the

slightest infection Last year 120 thousand died of cholera, 250 thousand of malaria, 350 thousand of tuberculosis and 100 thousand of enteric "

The following extracts from the health reports in Bombay province in 1933 prove Bengal to be no exception "The cholera figure for the week ending June 10th was 237 attacks, 81 deaths There were 72 cases of plague, 61 deaths There were 422 attacks of small pox, 71 deaths There were several deaths from influenza and pneumonia, one death from cerebro spinal fever and many malaria deaths" The death return of Bombay itself during the week ending June 17th was 494 in comparison with 389 in the corresponding week in 1932 The average death rate between 1928 and 1932 was 442 for this week Out of the total deaths, 143 were of infants under 1 year, during the corresponding week in 1933, whereas the birth rate was 184

Twenty per cent of the whole territory of India is covered by the State forest reserves, access to which is strictly forbidden to the peasants They are even forbidden to gather brush wood there or to pasture their cattle in the forests So the peasant, having nowhere from which he can gather firewood for his own needs, is compelled to use dried dung for fuel, thus depriving his fields of essential manure Labour in these forests is in the fullest sense of the word forced labour, since the Govern ment forest officers have the right to call upon the villages to provide labour which must be supplied immediately As a reward for his labour, the peasant may be allowed to gather brushwood in limited quantities and given a few very slight advantages in the pasturing of his cattle The Indian forests bring the Government every year 25 million rupees income, a great deal more than the great State forest enterprises of Canada and the United States bring in

Lastly, the Indian peasantry, robbed and ruined by the imperialist State and native landlord and money lender, has to suffer the exploitation of the priesthood It is one of the favourite tricks of English writers on India, to put the whole responsibility for the terrible position of the Indian masses, whose condition they are unable to deny, onto the masses themselves, by sneering references to their "backward" customs which make them spend every year relatively large sums on marriage and funeral ceremonies, as well as on the temple feasts But they forget to add that the greater portion of this money goes into the pockets of the priests and for the upkeep of the temples, the former also being very important landowners and money lenders Religion is one of the greatest

quarter of the population, while many hundreds of workers are entirely homeless and live on the streets. Cawnpore "is densely overcrowded and unsanitary," the labouring population numbering about 90,000 in all. "Three-quarters of the town is made up of private bustees or hatas, which are covered with houses either unfit for human habitation or in great need of improvement. Most of the houses consist of a single room, 8 by 10 feet, with or without a verandah . . . frequently shared by two, three or four families." In Ahmedabad, which is the home of Gandhism and from whose mill-owners Gandhi chiefly draws his funds, "the areas occupied by the working classes present pictures of terrible squalor. Nearly 92 per cent. of the houses are one-roomed, they are badly built, unsanitary, ill-ventilated, and overcrowded, whilst water supplies are altogether inadequate and latrine accommodation is almost entirely wanting. Resulting evils are physical deterioration, high infant mortality and a high general death rate." These are only a few quotations from the Whitley Report and refer to the "aristocrats" of Indian labour. Of the housing of the plantation workers and miners it is sufficient to say that it falls far beneath what has been quoted here and is hardly comprehensible under the category "housing" at all. In these circumstances it is not surprising that in the hot nights of summer the majority of the Indian workers in the great industrial areas sleep out on the pavements. According to the Bombay census report, 80 per cent. of the working population use the streets to supplement their own sleeping accommodation.

A few words about the food of the Indian worker. The Whitley Commission admits that "the workers' diet is unsatisfactory from many standpoints." The Hindu worker is a vegetarian, but, we are told by these same wise commissioners, milk is difficult for him to procure, ghi, the vegetable oil which is the basis of his diet, is unobtainable in a pure form, whilst vegetables and fruit are beyond his means. What then is a vegetarian to eat who cannot have milk, vegetables or fruit, or any kind of pure vegetable oil? The answer is, as Messrs. Whitley & Co. remark, "unsatisfactory from many standpoints." The daily ration in the Indian jails is considerably better than that of the industrial worker.

The condition of the plantation workers is much worse than that of the factory workers. Numbering about a million in all, they are recruited from the ruined and landless peasantry. The plantation owners send their agents into the villages to

recruit labour and incidentally to bind it to the plantations in the following way: The agent after a glowing description of conditions on the plantation, makes a " loan " to the peasant for the journey which effectively puts him at the mercy of the plantation owner when he arrives there. As if this were not enough, he is also bound by contract to work for a fixed period of years, after which he is generally so much in debt that he has to renew his contract and work for another period. Conditions on the plantations are horrible and we have here the very worst form of compulsory labour.

Labour of children of from 4 to 10 years old is a common thing on the plantations, according to the Whitley Commission. At the same time, according to the Commission, on many of the plantations almost a hundred per cent. of the workers suffer from malaria, while dysentry and tuberculosis are rife, and this is in the " healthy " hill district of Assam. The workers are kept in their " lines " under guard, and no one is allowed to approach them, so great is the fear of " absconsions " as they are called by the plantation owners, on the part of the desperate men and women who wish to escape before their contract term is over. There are frequent reports in the Indian Press of the trials of English plantation managers for violation of the young girls working on the plantations, or for brutal assaults on the labourers. Needless to say such trials almost invariably end in acquittals.

The most horrible conditions of labour, however, exist in the so-called " seasonal factories " which employ about a million and a half workers. These include such important industries as cotton ginning, tea factories, rice and oil mills, tobacco factories, etc. Here no compensation laws apply, there is no factory inspection, no safeguarding of machinery, no limit to the hours of work and the workers have to toil 14, 15 and even 16 hours a day, female and child labour is almost the rule, sanitary conditions are unspeakable, in the power-driven factories accidents are so frequent as to cause no remark whatever, while wages are paid monthly and a goodly proportion of them of course comes back to the sardar orl abour recruiter. This is the picture given by the Whitley Commission. With all these horrible conditions of labour, the dividends of Indian textile firms in pre-crisis years were frequently as high as 300 per cent., and even now, in the midst of the crisis, there are many firms paying 50 and 70 per cent.

D

The "Communal" Question

One of the most characteristic of the methods employed by the English colonial policy to strengthen the power of imperialism over the mercilessly exploited masses of India, is the skilful using of race and religious prejudices. India has more than 22 groups of the population speaking different languages and each of these groups numbers more than a million; there are in addition 9 *language groups with more than* 10 *million persons in each.* There are six chief different religious faiths in India, each of which can count many millions of followers, though of course the chief division is between Hinduism and Mohammedanism. With such a mixture of races and religions the English have little difficulty in artificially cultivating all possible kinds of race, national and religious prejudices.

The stirring up of pogroms of Hindus against Mussulmans, or vice versa, has become a complete art with the British. Whenever possible, religious pogroms are used to break the unity of the Hindu-Moslem masses. Mysterious groups of vagabonds, armed and controlled by mysterious societies of whom no one has previously heard, cause the most hideous massacres. Such, for example, were the pogroms of May-June-July, 1932, in Bombay, occurring just after the dock strike had created a great solidarity between workers of both faiths. Unknown pogromists, arrested in May, were at once released on nominal bail by the English magistrates and continued their bloody work.

The English papers immediately " draw the moral " and point out that if it were not for British bayonets India would in a few days become the prey of rapine and massacre. They forget to explain such simple facts as why, for example, in Bombay, a third of the veterinary surgeons are Moslems, thereby creating a permanent source of offence to the religious feelings of the Hindu population. In Midnapore, a district of Bengal, a punitive police force was recently operating. Of the population of 32,000, there are 22,266 Hindus, 8,555 Moslems, 1,154 Christians and 25 Europeans. Repressive taxes were imposed on the Hindus, except 3,266 judged to belong to the upper class. Moslems and Christians were exempted. Here is an excellent example not only of how the Government daily creates communal strife, but also of how it fosters class discrimination.

Whenever a strike breaks out in Bombay among the Hindu workers, the English replace the workers by Mussulman

peasants from the Pathan hills who play the double role of thugs and strike breakers It is interesting that in the dock strike which just preceded the Bombay pogrom, the workers succeeded in persuading a number of these Pathan strike-breakers to leave work and make a united front with the dock workers In 1931 during a great dock strike in Rangoon, the English deliberately provoked conflicts between the Hindu dockers and native Burmans whom they employed as strike-breakers After this it was not difficult to develop the conflict into a bloody pogrom lasting for many days The English Press never explain how it is that the British troops and armed police with their armoured cars are completely unable to prevent these massacres, whereas whenever a mass rising *against imperialism* takes place, there is never any hesitation in using immediately the greatest possible force and repressing it ruthlessly within the shortest possible time

It would, of course, be stupid to attribute all communal difficulties entirely to British imperialism The causes of many desperate struggles are purely economic, as, for example, the rivalry of Hindu and Mussulman traders in certain towns, the hatred felt for Hindu money lenders and Hindu landlords in others (Kashmir is an example), while very often movements of a purely economic character are deliberately given out as being communal in origin, as with the recent peasant rising in the State of Alwar What is certainly true, however, is the fact that imperialism maintains in being for its own ends the feudal system which fosters these outbreaks, and never fails to make the most of them when they occur

The development of the anti imperialist movement in India has not been without its effect on the native army, and here again imperialism has had to resort to national and religious prejudices to retain its authority In native battalions the four companies are now formed from four different races The famous Sikh regiments are now broken up in this way since the hatred of the Sikh peasantry for their rulers has become so intense as to make it impossible to rely upon the Sikh regiments The division between Hindu and Mussulman is now to be erected into a permanent feature of the Indian constitution by the creation of special electoral rights for the 70 million Indian Mussulmans, or rather for the landlords, money lenders and merchants among them, which will give them equality in the new constitution with the overwhelming millions of Hindus The English have even gone to the extent of developing a special

Mussulman sect at whose head stands that notorious fancier of race horses, the portly Aga Khan, whose chief religious tenet is support of British imperialism. In making use of national and religious prejudices the English have shown themselves in India to be far more cunning than even the Russian Tsars were in the art of dividing the oppressed nationalities over whom they ruled.

CHAPTER V

CLASS STRUGGLE IN INDIA, AND THE BRITISH "REFORMS"

The Stages of British Policy

In the development of British colonial policy in India there are four important stages each leading to a definite crisis The first crisis, the result of the robber policy of industrial capitalism, which was steadily ruining the old Asiatic economy, without any compensating development of productive forces, came to a head in the great mutiny of 1857 Suppressing the mutiny by fire and sword, the British bourgeoisie made a sharp turn in their policy They strengthened their shaken alliance with the feudal and money lending exploiters of the Indian masses and proceeded to the so called "development" of India

This "development" consisted in the building of a great net work of roads and railways, the construction of irrigation works, the opening of schools and universities for training the minimum of native personnel which the running of a modern State demands But the railways, as Marx observed in his letter to Danielson, were "useless to the Indians,' since they merely served the double purpose of draining the produce of the Indian villages to the ports and fulfilling the strategic demands of the British General Staff Furthermore, the whole burden of paying for them fell and falls upon the Indian masses Similarly the irrigation works, built at a tremendous cost owing to the corrup tion of the contractors and the officials of the "incorruptible" I C S only meant for the peasant an increase in taxation, the necessity of cultivating high priced export crops in place of food for himself and family, and therefore additional indebted ness In the 'sixties and 'seventies peasant discontent found its outlet in the only ways known to it, a great increase of "dacoity," or brigandage, secret conspiracies against British rule of both Hindu and Mussulman peasants, mass attacks on money lenders and landlords in the Poona district and risings of the plantation slaves on the Bengal indigo estates

This crisis is marked also by the appearance on the scene for the first time as a political force, of the native Indian bourgeoisie, but more as an ally than an opponent of British imperialism. The Bombay textile industry was in the midst of a period of short-lived development, and the Indian manufacturer was becoming a factor in Indian politics. But in the Indian National Congress, born in 1885 largely on British initiative, the manufacturer as yet played a secondary role. The Congress was formed as the first Indian political organisation representing an alliance of the interests of the young bourgeoisie and the landlord money-lending classes, having as its aim the widening of the basis of British rule, and thus giving a freer hand to deal with the threatening peasant discontent. The first effects of the new policy were that Indians were given a somewhat wider share of the well-paid posts of the I.C.S., and that a few farcical measures of local " self-government " were introduced by Lord Ripon, the Viceroy, and later in the 'nineties extended somewhat.

The epoch of imperialism, in which India becomes the axis on which turns the whole British imperial system, in which to the exploitation of the country as a market and source of raw materials is added a further exploitation through a big development of capital export, brought with it also the beginnings of what was to develop into a mighty movement for national liberation. Finding its first expression at the end of the nineteenth century in the terrorist movement and the democratic nationalism of Tilak, bursting into mass struggle in 1907-09, with the coming of the general crisis of capitalism in 1914, it becomes a great factor in the world revolutionary movement. From 1918-1922, India's millions engaged in a life and death battle with British imperialism which ends in their temporary defeat, and the complete betrayal of the national movement by the Indian bourgeoisie.

The fourth stage in the development of English policy comes in 1928. India's millions again move into the revolutionary front but with this difference, that this time the national bourgeoisie plays an open counter-revolutionary role and the proletariat, which in 1907 and 1919 had played a great but spontaneous part, now comes boldly forward to struggle for the leadership in the Indian revolution, a struggle still in its early stages and which will prove a long and difficult one.

The unchanging basis of English policy in India accepted by

all the English bourgeois political parties, including the Labour Party, is the preservation of the full colonial dependence of India on British imperialism Any change in the basis of colonial dependence of India would lead to the breaking up of the whole system of British imperialism Such open imperialists as the late Joynson Hicks and Churchill declare this openly when they state that India was won by the sword and must be kept by the sword if British capitalism wishes to preserve its own existence, and the British labour aristocracy to preserve its share in the super profits won from the exploitation of India The same idea is expressed less openly by such a leader of the Labour Party as Lord Olivier who stated in 1924 that "the right of English statesmen, officials, merchants and industrialists who remain in India is founded on the fact that modern India was created by their hands," or by Mr Brailsford when he writes in his book, *Rebel India,* that "the positive balance in the social, political and economic spheres of British rule is tremendous" (p 169), or, when he proposes for India the colonial constitution worked out at the Round Table Conference including the retention of the British army as "an insurance against the internal danger starting with religious conflicts and ending with a new mutiny" (p 221)

India is a Colonial Dependency

Indian economy has been made into an apanage of British economy, while politically, India is completely ruled by Britain It is owing to this economic dependence that British capitalism is able to rule over the 350 million population of India The land holding system of India leaves half the land directly in the hands of the English Government and the other half with the landlords and feudal princes of the native states who are directly dependent on the British Government, the state income of India is largely derived from monopolies, the land monopoly, the salt, opium and spirit monopolies, and tariffs from which British goods are excepted because of the preference duties At the same time England annually drains out of India 35 millions sterling as payments for the expenses of government, interest on loans, etc These facts emphasise the complete colonial dependence of India on the metropolis, but even more than this, that dependence is characterised by the efforts of British imperialism to put up barriers against the normal economic development of the country, to hold it in the position of an agrarian raw material colony, squeezing the surplus product out of the

Indian peasant by means of feudal exploitation and the preservation of the most primitive forms of agriculture.

The Basis of the Class Struggle

In order to understand the peculiar forms in which the class struggle develops in India, it is absolutely essential to understand this peculiar colonial form of Indian economy. Reference has been made to this before, but it must be summed up finally, so that the disposition of class forces becomes quite clear to the reader. India is overwhelmingly a peasant country, but it is a country whose former self-sufficing peasant economy has been destroyed by capitalism. The Indian peasant is no longer able to feed and cloth his household by their own labour. He cultivates a single crop to-day, which he is compelled to sell in order to pay rent, taxes, and interest to the money-lender. If he produces a crop, he is generally unable to afford to keep cattle, and consequently to care for large grazing lands.

Lord Irwin very neatly summed up the whole function in life of the Indian peasant in a speech which he made to the landowners of Nagpur in 1926 :

"You have referred to the great increase in cultivated area during recent years and the consequent diminution of grazing lands. Your Government is fully alive to the necessity for improving the breed of your cattle, both plough bullocks and milk cows. But I need hardly remind you of the service you are doing to your country by increasing the produce of your land. India to-day requires to import many things which she requires for the comfort of her people and the further development of her industries. For these she has to pay by her exports to the markets of the world, and therefore in increasing the quantity and improving the quality of your produce it is good to remember that there is patriotism to your great country as well as profit to yourselves."

The profit, of course, goes to the landowner and money-lender whom the Viceroy was addressing, and not to the actual cultivator. He, wretched man, is bound to produce his crop of cotton, jute, wheat, rice or oil-seeds for the world market, receiving in return just enough to keep him alive in years of plenty and rather less in years of drought or crisis. He lives under a system of compulsion, just as did the mediæval serf, and like the serf, is compelled to yield his surplus product to his exploiters.

Capitalism, breaking down the old Asiatic economy, bringing suffering and semi-starvation to the peasant millions, has failed

entirely to develop the productive forces of the exploited countries Capitalism is only able to develop and expand productive forces so long as it is able to create a capitalist market But in colonial countries the internal market is non capitalist, being formed by the peasant and artisan masses who live in the conditions of feudalism Imperialism cannot change these conditions, cannot make this internal market a capitalist market if it is to continue to squeeze its surplus profits out of colonial exploitation So in India and other colonial countries imperialism creates for itself contradictions which can only be solved by the revolutionary forces of the workers' and peasants' revolution

"The internal market for capitalism," writes Lenin, "is created by developing capitalism itself The degree of development of the internal market is the degree of internal development of capitalism in the country To put the question of the internal limits of the market apart from the question of the degree of capitalism is incorrect" (*Development of Capitalism in Russia*, p 42)

The internal market in India consists of the pauperised peasantry suffering from the full force of the economic crisis of world capitalism, of the colonial working class of India living in the most wretched conditions, and the expropriated peasant and artisan masses who can find no employment either as wage labourers in the towns or as farm labourers in the country These are the limits of the internal market in India, and throw a vivid light on the degree of development of capitalism in that country, a development deliberately limited by imperialism

Those who, like the "theorists" of the Labour Party and I L P, or like the renegade Roy, pretend that an unlimited development of capitalism is possible in India and therefore a peaceful solution of the national problem in India, are completely ignorant of the laws of development of capitalism in colonial countries which were first worked out by Marx and Lenin

The very fact that capitalism, however, does exist, though in a severely limited degree, in the colonial countries, provides the historical solution for the future development of these countries Capitalism inevitably creates a proletariat, and in colonial countries a very revolutionary proletariat This proletariat, in alliance with the masses of toiling peasantry in these countries, is the revolutionary force which will throw off the fetters of imperialism and bring bread and life to the starving people.

But imperialism which must keep India as a colony, an agrarian tributary and a market for capital export, and can only do so by preventing the development of capitalism, by preserving *feudal* methods of exploitation of the peasant masses, therefore finds itself in a blind alley. With the contraction of markets for British exports, due to the loss of her industrial monopoly and the growth of great rival imperialisms, the question of the development of the colonies and above all of India's teeming millions as a market for the products of British industry becomes a vital one. Yet it is an insoluble problem. Even the Indian textile industry, weak by comparison with the British, is in the same difficulty of being unable to develop the internal market. Thus a curious position arises. The population of India is big enough to keep all the spindles in Bombay and Lancashire humming day and night, but since it has practically no purchasing power even Indian textiles are bound to seek their chief market abroad, where they come into conflict once more with the products of Lancashire. Finally, Japanese imperialism exploiting its own proletariat in colonial conditions, still further complicates the situation by dumping on to the Indian market the goods it cannot sell at home and clashing with Bombay and Oldham in the markets of the Far East.

Lord Irwin expressed this acute consciousness of the difficulty in his speech to the Agricultural Conference at Simla in 1926 :

"The difficulties by which the general improvement of agriculture in India is hedged about are well known to you all. The recurrence of cycles of deficiency in rainfall, scarcity of capital and high rates of interest, excessive fragmentation of holdings, the ravages of pests and disease, the absence of markets for what are profitable by-products of land in other countries and the consequent concentration on tillage and crops combine to create a collection of problems for scientific investigation which are not only peculiar to India but unique in their range and complexity."

So in 1929 the Royal Commission on Agriculture made its report. Its chief proposed remedy was "scientific research," though it expressed also the pious hope that the money-lender might become a capitalist farmer and "develop" Indian agriculture. However, even if this were possible without causing a terrible peasant revolt, the money-lender, sure of his quick and enormously profitable return on his capital under the present system, is hardly likely to oblige so long as British

bayonets protect him and the British tax system forces the peasant into his arms. In " advanced " Bombay, yet another method has been tried, that of compulsory expropriation of the poor peasantry. It was proposed to make 5 acres the minimum holding which could be worked by any peasant, thereby putting 4 million peasant farms face to face with extinction. Before the protests of the peasantry the Bombay Government did not dare to put the measure into operation.

Lastly, in 1930, the Labour Government sent the Whitley Commission to India with the aim of seeing if it were not possible to raise the status of at least a section of the Indian proletariat. This would have at once reduced the possibility of the Bombay manufacturer undercutting his Lancashire rival, divided the Indian proletariat itself and temporarily checked its march to leadership in the national liberation movement, and finally, improved the purchasing power of a part of the Indian masses. But, alas, imperialism can no more improve the position of the colonial worker than that of the peasant, and even the extremely mild proposals of the Whitley Commission mostly remain on paper.

Restraints on Industrial Progress

During the 40 years 1891-1931, the percentage of the working population occupied in agriculture rose from 61 to 66.4. Parallel with this process all possible kinds of difficulties and obstacles were put in the way of native industry, which by the efforts particularly of the Lancashire millowners was tied hand and foot. For example, when at the end of the nineteenth century the fall in the price of silver gave the Indian capitalists a very great advantage in rapid accumulation, and allowed the textile industry in Bombay temporarily to advance with swift steps, the English introduced the gold standard into India along with the existing silver coinage and artificially stabilised the rupee on a high level, in this way depriving the Indian industrialists of all the advantages they had temporarily obtained over their Lancashire rivals. From the 'nineties until the imperialist war, with the exception of a certain growth of the textile industry, there was very little development in Indian industry.

In 1894 the Indian Government, in order to raise its revenues, had to introduce a 5 per cent. tariff on imported yarn and cotton goods. The English capitalists in order to deprive the Indian manufacturers of any advantage from this tariff, immediately commanded the Indian Government to place a 5 per cent.

excise on all yarn and cotton goods produced in India. Afterwards the tariff and excise were lowered to 3.5 per cent. During the debate in the House of Commons in 1916 on the lowering of this excise duty, Philip Snowden, speaking for I.L.P. members and *on behalf of the Lancashire manufacturers,* opposed the motion. Even at this time British reformism was against concession to any section of the Indian people which might injure British capitalism, though it appears as the "champion" of that very Indian bourgeoisie whose robbery by Lancashire cotton lords it supported in 1916. The tariff and excise lasted until the imperialist war changed the general position, and the tariffs were raised to 11 per cent., while the excise was abolished in 1925. After the war a general tariff on all imported goods was introduced in India since the Government could not balance its enormously increased budget in any other way. In order that the Indian bourgeoisie should draw no particular advantage from this tariff the Imperial Government thought out a new trick—they began energetically a process of deflation of the currency, and in 1927, despite the protests of the Bombay manufacturers, fixed the Indian rupee at 1s. 6d.

Nevertheless, in 1929-1930, it was again decided to raise the tariffs in certain cases, for example with regard to cotton goods, the tariff was even doubled, but at the same time all measures were taken to prevent Indian industry from using this increased tariff in its own interests, for a preferential tariff was introduced in favour of their chief competitors, the Lancashire cotton kings. The introduction of preferential tariffs for English goods was a heavy blow at Indian industry, and even the imperialist writer Miss Vera Anstey, author of the most recent history of Indian economy, recognised that "in general, India gains almost nothing from the introduction of preferential tariffs for Empire goods whilst she loses much and risks a great deal." Protection for India's iron and steel industry has been steadily refused and and was only recently introduced, after British capital had gained a big interest in the Tata firm, and even then with a heavy preference.

The development of native industry is also held back by the banks which are almost entirely in English hands. The banks refrain from granting credits to Indian industrial enterprises, giving preference to the financing of various commercial operations and transactions connected with the harvest, since agriculture and trade bring quicker profits and are the source of a great part of the Government revenues.

So with regard to the role of British imperialism in India, the resolution of the 6th Congress of the Comintern applies exactly when it says that "the entire economic policy of imperialism in relation to the colonies is determined by its endeavour to preserve and increase their dependence, to deepen their exploitation and, as far as possible, to impede their independent development"

It is characteristic for the dependent colonial position of India that its whole system of government is also of a typically colonial character Despite the luxurious imperial "capital" in Delhi with its extravagant buildings built on money squeezed from the pauperised peasantry, despite the double chamber parliament, the chamber of princes, the ministries and secretariats, despite the "reforms" and constitutional concessions, the foundations of Indian government remain to this day those which were established in 1858 immediately after the "great revolt" of 1857

Supreme power in India belongs to the Viceroy nominated by the British Government He has the right to put his veto on any decision of his own Council or of his "ministers" Of his own will he can give force to any law which has been rejected by the legislative bodies, as for example, the law for the deportation of non Indian Communists which he passed in 1929 despite its rejection by the Indian Legislative Assembly Finally, he can dismiss "parliament" at his own will and need not summon it again for as long a period as he deems necessary

But the Viceroy himself is subordinate to the Secretary of State for India, who is a member of the British Cabinet in London Since 1858 the real ruler of India in the interests of the British bourgeoisie has been the Secretary of State The British Parliament can demand from him a report once a year during the discussion on the India Office estimates, but generally, the majority of members choose this day to be absent It has become a tradition that there should be no party interference with the Government of India

The first important constitutional "reform" was given to India in 1909 when the Liberal Government created central and provincial legislative councils in India, part of whose members were elected, though the central legislative body still retained a majority of members nominated by the Viceroy Since, however, neither the provincial legislative councils nor the central council had any legislative power whatever, and had to content themselves with passing resolutions, the famous reforms

of Lords Morley and Minto did not long satisfy the Indian bourgeoisie. Yet the English only made such a miserable concession under the threat of the powerful revolutionary national movement which had gained tremendous force after the Russian revolution of 1905. The swift development of this movement seriously disturbed the British Government, which was busily preparing for war with Germany and also occupied with the solution of the difficult Irish question.

The imperialist war of 1914-1918 created a crisis of the whole British Empire. South Africa and Ireland witnessed open revolts, the Irish revolt coming at a particularly critical moment for the British bourgeoisie. Soon after the outbreak of war it became clear that the Indian Army was far from being a reliable fighting instrument. 1915 saw the beginning of a revolutionary conspiracy in India aiming at the overthrow of British rule by armed revolt. Mutinies became frequent in the Indian army. The Indian bourgeoisie, to whom war-time conditions were allowing a temporary rapid capitalist development, with ever greater insistence was calling for reforms, and British imperialism, temporarily forced to treat it as an ally and to allow it a trifling share of the profits of the war, was faced with the necessity of taking some steps to prevent the left wing of the national movement falling into the hands of the revolutionaries who aimed at an all-Indian people's revolt against British imperialism and its Indian lackeys. In 1917 the Lloyd George Government through the mouth of Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, promised legislative "autonomy" and in 1919 the "promise" was "fulfilled," in the shape of the Chelmsford-Montagu "reforms." The Government was reconstructed on the principle of "diarchy" by the setting up of Indian provincial and central legislative assemblies, in which authority was "shared" between the British Government and the native bourgeoisie. Dominion Home Rule was promised as soon as ever the country should be prepared for accepting such "great responsibility."

The introduction of diarchy was a clever manœuvre of British imperialism. The appearance of some concession to the Indian bourgeoisie was made whilst the essence of India's colonial dependence remained untouched. The meaning of diarchy was as follows: The number of elected members in the central and provincial legislative assemblies was increased, as was the number of persons possessing the franchise, while the legislative assemblies received the right of passing legislation in the spheres

of education, health, etc., and of nominating Indian ministers to lead these departments. But the real power, as before, remained in the hands of the Viceroy and the provincial governors. The Indian legislative institutions, as before, were not permitted to discuss any questions affecting defence, foreign policy or finances, while the transfer of health and education to the native assemblies, gave the English the chance to blame the Indians themselves for all the defects in these spheres. The number of people who received the franchise after 1919 was extremely limited, about 8 millions of the population which at that time numbered 320 millions, these 8 millions being chiefly landlords, merchants, industrialists, members of the legal profession and persons with higher education.

The Simon Commission

It is hardly surprising that such a system of government was very quickly exposed as a farce, and at the present time, faced with a new wave of revolution, British imperialism is seeking new forms which shall still more cunningly mask its real power in India and bring the Indian bourgeoisie to complete capitulation, thus making it possible to suppress the revolutionary movement of the worker, peasant and petty-bourgeois masses. In 1927 the Baldwin Conservative Government sent a special commission to India in which all parties were represented, including two official representatives of the "Labour" Party, Major Attlee and Vernon Hartshorn, the latter of whom was also a member of the I.L.P. The chairman of the Commission was the well-known barrister, Sir John Simon, at present Foreign Secretary of the National Government. The task of the Commission was to investigate the existing diarchy system and to propose fresh reforms. The report of the Commission appeared in 1930, when the second Labour Government was in power, and its proposals were of such a reactionary character that in view of the situation in India itself they could not directly be forced on the country without completely exposing Gandhi and the national-reformists of the Congress Party.

The Simon Commission proposed to abolish the diarchy system and replace it by autonomous central and provincial legislative chambers which would have the right to consider all the problems of State life and legislate on all questions except questions concerning defence, finance and external policy. The Commission proposed a union of all the counter-revolutionary reactionary forces against the threatening anti-imperialist

agrarian revolution, but at the same time, offered practically no concession whatever to the Indian bourgeoisie, a measure of the determination of the British imperialists to allow no scrap of their extra-economic hold over India's life to be given up.

The MacDonald Government, quick to see the inconvenience of accepting the Simon proposals in their naked form, decided to cook them up with a new sauce and offer them up as being already accepted by the representatives of the " Indian people." For this aim a " Round Table Conference " was arranged in London, at which were represented the three capitalist parties in England—conservative, liberal and labour—and the more reactionary elements of the Indian bourgeoisie, landlords and feudal princes. MacDonald, the former pride of the 2nd International, presided over the conference. Gandhi and the Indian nationalists, striving to preserve a decent appearance of " struggle " against British imperialism, refused to take part. Their aim was double ; first to force the English to make further concessions, and secondly, to deceive the popular masses in India by creating a false impression that the Congress and Gandhi were struggling for their interests.

So, at the Round Table Conference, there appeared a goodly number of Indian merchants and landlords, the biggest native princes, a few industrialists and two agents of British imperialism who call themselves representatives of the Indian working class. The two labour ministers, MacDonald and Wedgewood Benn, who led the work of the conference, proved fully equal to their tasks. They cunningly divided Hindus and Mussulmans, and demanded that the new constitution should give the necessary advantages to the big Mussulman landlords, the truest allies of the British rule. The conference decided to take the principle of federation as the basis of the new constitution, leaving untouched all caste, religious and national contradictions, which serve for strengthening the rule of British imperialism in India. Having got the consent of the Indian " delegates " at the conference, the Macdonald government at once entered into negotiations with Gandhi and the Congress who had so demonstratively boycotted the conference, in order that it might prolong its " labours," at a second session in London.

Gandhi, who was at this time taking one of his " rest periods " in his prison suite of three rooms with a garden and special servants, was only too willing to make the necessary agreement. The mass movement was rapidly getting out of his control and by making a " truce " with Lord Irwin, the Viceroy, by which

on the one hand Congress promised to call off the campaign of civil disobedience begun in the spring of 1930 and on the other hand the Government agreed to release all those arrested Indians who were not charged with violent actions. Gandhi was able to make an appearance of having won concessions from the Government. The permission to gather salt off the seashore in small limited quantities was given, while the property of well-to-do peasants which had been confiscated for refusal to pay taxes was returned, and a limited legality given to the Congress pickets who were carrying out the boycott of English goods.

In return for Gandhi's treachery, the British Government obtained the practical calling off of the boycott which had been doing serious damage to British imperialism. Yet the Meerut Communists arrested in 1928 continued to sit in prison unsentenced, workers, peasants and intellectuals who had defended themselves against the police terror remained in jail, the Sikh revolutionaries, Bhagat Singh and his companions, were hanged; the salt monopoly, an unbearable burden on the shoulders of the Indian peasantry, remained practically untouched, the land confiscated from those peasants who had demonstrated not only against the Government, but against their own landlords, was not returned. It is not astonishing that the treachery of Gandhi and the Indian bourgeoisie called forth a fresh wave of indignation and protest among the masses and opened the eyes of millions to the real meaning of national reformism.

There is no limit to the deceit and trickery which the national bourgeoisie of India will use to keep the masses under its influence, but this last betrayal exceeded all its predecessors. The Madras Congress in 1927 had, under pressure of the masses, been forced to demand independence for India, but in 1928, at the Calcutta Conference, Gandhi succeeded in sabotaging this demand, bringing in a resolution that Congress would agree to accept dominion home rule if it were given in the course of a year. At the end of 1929, Congress issued a manifesto signed by both its right and "left" leaders. In this manifesto the Congress expressed its readiness to make any concessions demanded by the English, but the latter did not deign to notice this readiness to suffer their yoke. When the year's time limit which Gandhi had declared came to an end, and India had still not received dominion home rule, while the movement of the masses, particularly of the proletariat, hourly gathered force, the Congress meeting at Lahore in December, 1929, "declared

war " on the English, lest they should finally compromise themselves before the Indian masses.

Gandhi's " war " was the famous campaign against the salt monopoly and boycott of English goods. The " demands " which Gandhi made to the English Government, consisted of eleven points, expressing the class interests of the Indian bourgeoisie, as for example, the introduction of tariffs, a monopoly of the coastal trade, etc. With these demands, Gandhi hoped to win some concessions from the Government and stave off the inevitable struggle implied in the " declaration of war." When the masses joined in the " war " declared by Gandhi, and began to show a real revolutionary activity, fighting with the police in the villages, raising the banner of peasant revolt in the North-West Frontier provinces, seizing Peshawar and the factory town of Sholapur, organising mass strikes in Bombay and Karachi, above all, when in Peshawar itself, the centre of English military domination in the north, a part of the Indian garrison, the Garwahli Rifles, fraternised with the masses, Gandhi hastened to denounce these " violent acts."

Nevertheless, however much he might wish to, Gandhi could not use his influence to call off the movement which he had started. The Government, moreover, faced with mass revolt, could not longer risk tolerating even the mild opposition of Gandhi and his sympathisers among the wealthy Congress leaders, so he was arrested, together with the other leading Congress figures. Once in prison they at once began negotiations for the betrayal of the mass movement, screened by the reputation for martyrdom given to them by the Government's persecution.

The leaders of the Congress used every effort to prevent the peasant movement against the payment of taxes from becoming a mass movement threatening also the Indian landlords. The conversations which Gandhi and the two Nehrus carried on in prison with the representatives of the Government had the full approval of the Congress. When the betrayal was completed, the " left " Jawaharlal Nehru made one more effort to deceive the masses, declaring that Gandhi's agreement with Lord Irwin was " not peace but an armistice " and if Congress should be convinced that the second Round Table Conference gave " no hopes of gaining real independence " the struggle would again be taken up.

Gandhi was released and, accompanied by adoring ladies and paeons of praise from the reformist Press in England, came to

London, to be met by MacDonald and his "Labour" colleagues with open arms and, if a little less warmly, still cordially enough, by even the most reactionary representatives of British monopoly capitalism. The second Round Table Conference began its labours, but it was soon to meet with a sorry end. The world economic crisis was passing into the phase of a financial and credit crisis. The Indian bourgeoisie, itself closely bound up with the backward semi-feudal exploiting elements, landlords and money-lenders, was anxious enough to make any compromise. But it must receive something out of that compromise, for the deepening crisis was making it feel more acutely than ever its dependence on British imperialism, its lack of free development.

Then came the financial crash in England, shattering not only the pound sterling, but any dreams Gandhi may have possessed that he was going to obtain even the shadow of the form of "equality" between British and Indian bourgeoisie. The constitution which was finally proposed to him, he did not even dare to suggest should be accepted by the Indian bourgeoisie, though characteristically he did not especially condemn it. Like Trotsky, his favourite slogan is "neither war nor peace." For the National Congress to have accepted the Round Table proposals would have condemned them for ever before even those ever-narrowing sections of the petty bourgeois masses who continue to give them grudging support. Furthermore, some show of opposition to British imperialism in the terrible conditions of the world crisis was a necessary condition for the national bourgeoisie as a whole, if it was to succeed in keeping back the development of a revolution already proving itself not only anti-imperialist, but anti-landlord, anti-money-lender.

On Gandhi's return, the Congress refused to accept the constitution and franchise, which would have given complete power to the Mussulman landlords, the Indian princes and the direct nominees of imperialism, without any compensating economic and political advantages for the Indian bourgeoisie. The mass movement broke out again with renewed violence, the Congress continued its farce of "opposition," and a kindly Viceroy again put Mr. Gandhi's prison suite at his disposal. The Congress was declared illegal, but this did not for a moment hinder it in its work of diverting and holding back the mass movement, and even calling for the aid of the Government when it becomes too sharply anti-capitalist or anti-landlord.

The Indian White Paper

In March, 1933, the deliberations of the Simon Commission and the Round Table Conference found final form in a Government White Paper containing the proposals for the new Indian constitution. This lengthy document is certainly one of the most curious and interesting of its kind ever issued, and its contents are worth a careful analysis. It is proposed that India shall become a Federal State, with a two-chamber legislature, thus for the first time formally embodying the native states in the British Dominions. At the head of this Federal State will be the Viceroy, the direct representative of the King (or in other words, of British finance capital), while the provincial legislatures will similarly be placed under the control of the Governors, who are also royal representatives.

The powers of the Viceroy, far from suffering any diminution, will be more sharply defined and despotic than they are at present. All questions of external affairs, defence, ecclesiastical administration, and certain very important matters in which he has "special responsibility" are reserved for his decision, and his decision alone. He need consult neither the Chambers nor Ministers in such matters. The matters in which he has "special responsibility" are extremely interesting and worth reproduction. They run as follows :

"(i) The prevention of grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of India or of any part thereof.
(ii) The safeguarding of the financial stability and credit of the Federation.
(iii) The safeguarding of the legitimate interests of minorities.
(iv) The securing to the members of the Public Services of any rights provided for them by the Constitution and the safeguarding of their legitimate interests.
(v) The protection of the rights of any Indian State.
(vi) The prevention of commercial discrimination.
(vii) Any matter which affects the administration of the Reserved Departments."

It will easily be seen that these powers make the Viceroy as absolute a monarch as ever was the Tsar of Russia or the Sultan of Turkey, and rather more absolute than the Mogul Emperors. Particularly interesting are the reservations with regard to finance, which in effect completely deprive the Indian bourgeoisie of any form of control over their own economic existence. Finally, in order to carry out these powers, this twentieth

century Tamburlaine has authority to make and pass his own Acts of Parliament "notwithstanding an adverse vote in the Legislature," can stop discussion in the Legislature and prorogue both Houses whenever he wishes, and finally make his own rules for legislative business The same powers are granted to provincial Governors It only remains to remind the reader that these autocrats, the Viceroy and Governors, are Englishmen appointed by the English King, and the degree of "independence" involved is apparent

The two Chambers are to be elected in such a way as to exclude 98 per cent of the people of British India from the franchise The total number of voters will be between 7,000,000 and 8,000,000 There will be no voters at all among the 80,000,000 people of the native states whose rulers will simply appoint their representatives The lower Chamber (House of Assembly) will have 375 members, of whom only 105 will be elected in a more or less normal manner, 125 will be appointed by the feudal rulers of the states, and the rest will be so divided as to preserve all those religions and racial differences on which British Imperialism relies so strongly There will be 82 Moslems, 8 Christians, 4 Anglo Indians, 19 members of the "depressed classes" (the lower castes, whose wealthier members have been very cunningly used by the British to divide the Hindu population over the question of the treatment of these castes), and so on There will also be 18 representatives of the industrialists and landowners and 10 representatives of "labour"

Surely in all history, the mind of man has not hitherto succeeded in conceiving a more curious system of "representation," more cunningly designed to perpetuate every kind of religious and class distinction The same principles apply to the Upper Chamber, the Council of State, only in more extreme form The provincial legislatures are similarly designed, save that here the franchise is somewhat wider, some 14 per cent of the population

The fate of these proposals has been no less curious than their content It would be thought that any attempt so outrageous to bind the Indian people more firmly than ever to the exploitation of their imperialist masters would have aroused the violent resentment even of the most timid members of the bourgeoisie Yet the contrary has happened While not openly accepting the new proposals, the Indian bourgeoisie has started no campaign against them, and accept for a group on the "left"

of the National Congress, has not even violently denounced them. Opposition has come from the right, from the Princes in India, and from the " die-hard " Tories in England.

The opposition of the Princes is easy to explain. They are afraid that Federal financial control may mean eventually that they will lose full control of their own people, a control whose nature is sufficiently indicated in the budget published above, and be compelled to share their exploitation with the British. There is probably also a feeling that the publicity of appearing in the Chambers as the most reactionary champions of British rule may prove politically dangerous.

The case of the Tory die-hards is more important. The opposition led by Churchill and Lord Lloyd which has gained such influence inside the Tory Party, has very deep roots. The leaders of imperialism understand very well that a crisis has been reached in India, that the rulers are faced with the mass revolt of a huge population unable to endure further. They perfectly understand that this revolt is not confined to India, that it is maturing in every Eastern country. Finally, they see clearly that the conditions for another great war are all there, that such a war is inevitable, and that India will probably be one of the centres of operations.

The die-hard sections are afraid in these circumstances that even the *appearance* of a concession to the Indian bourgeoisie may mean a weakening of the British grip and lead to the open outbreak of a great peasant uprising. They are for abandoning all pretence of concession and for the use of terror on an unprecedented scale to beat down all opposition. The growth of class struggle in England, the sympathy of the most advanced workers for the Indian masses, confirm them in this point of view. In addition this group represents the economic interest of the " younger sons " of the British bourgeoisie who are afraid that " Indianisation " of the military and bureaucratic apparatus will deprive them of lucrative posts.

As opposed to this, the official Tory view is that traditional British colonial policy by the timely appearance of a concession while retaining all the reality of power, combined with the most ruthless suppression when necessary, has hitherto been eminently successful. This view, which has the support of both Liberal and Labour Parties, is likely to prevail, for the die-hard opposition will presumably be bought off by various concessions before the new constitution comes into force.

CHAPTER VI

THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN INDIA

Birth of the National Movement

The national revolutionary movement in India has been long in developing. The Indian National Congress, the political organisation of the bourgeoisie, founded in 1885, for a long time only represented the interests of merchants, landlords and lawyers and a small number of mill-owners. Only after 1905 did the Congress receive fresh forces with the coming of the new revolutionary students and the petty bourgeoisie into the movement. Simultaneously it split into a right and left wing. The revolutionary movement had first appeared in 1897 at a time when the yoke of imperialism was being felt with particular sharpness. All efforts of the Indian bourgeoisie to obtain some kind of widening base for Indian industry had been brought to nothing by the money reform and the stabilisation of the rupee. In addition, great discontent among them had been caused by the introduction of the excise imposed by the Government on cotton goods of native production. Hunger and plague were sweeping over the country. Under the influence of this environment, a group of young Hindus, inspired by the nationalist agitation of Tilak, committed a number of terrorist acts on English officials.

The nationalist movement got a further impetus as a result of the policy carried out by Lord Curzon during his term as Viceroy. Curzon cut Bengal into two with the aim of isolating the revolutionary movement, guaranteeing English support from the big Mussulman landlord and deepening the division between Hindu and Mussulman. As a result of this policy the revolutionary petty-bourgeois youth flowed in thousands into the Congress, which quickly divided into "moderates" and "extremists." The extreme left section of the movement did not cease its terrorist acts and carried the war on imperialism even to London, where a prominent official, Sir Curzon Wyllie,

was shot by an Indian student who had hoped to kill no less a person than Lord Curzon himself.

At this time, 1908, the Indian working class first began to take an active part in the national revolutionary struggle, and in Bombay a general strike of the textile workers ended in three days' street fighting and the setting up of barricades. In connection with these demonstrations, which began as a protest against the savage sentence passed on the national democrat Tilak, Lenin wrote:

"The proletariat in India has already grown up to a conscious political mass struggle, and once that has happened, the song of Anglo-Russian 'order' in India is sung. . . . There is not the slightest doubt that the century-old robbery of India by the English, the contemporary struggle of these 'advanced' Europeans against Persian and Indian democracy, will harden millions and tens of millions of proletarians in Asia . . . for struggle against the oppressors. The conscious European worker now has Asiatic comrades and the number of these comrades will increase not daily, but hourly" (*Inflammable Material in World Politics*).

The English Liberal Government answered this movement by fresh repressions and terror, mass imprisonments and hangings, and finally by means of negligible concessions, the "Morley Reforms," succeeded in temporarily dividing the movement, the bourgeoisie confining itself to strictly "constitutional" opposition and frowning on all manifestations of real mass movement.

But a mass revolutionary movement which really threatened British rule only began in India at the end of the imperialist war, 1914-18. The impoverishment of the peasantry, the terrible conditions of labour and growth of political consciousness among the proletariat, the discontent of the demobilised peasant soldiers, the fear of the bourgeoisie that the wartime development of industry would be cut short, a fear which was well grounded, all these things together led to the development, on the background of the post-war economic crisis, of a great mass movement against English rule.

The victory of the workers' revolution in Russia, the freeing of the Central-Asian colonies of the Tsar, and the immediate reaction of this on Afghanistan, which began a war of national liberation against the British, gave a deep revolutionary character to the new movement such as not only India, but Asia as a whole had not known before.

The Post-war Revolt

At the head of the movement stood Gandhi and the National Congress, preaching the doctrines of passive resistance and civil dis obedience to the masses The tactic of non resistance employed by the Indian workers and peasants at the bidding of Gandhi and the Congress, inevitably led to mass shootings from British machine guns as in the horrible massacre of Amritsar, where over 800 men, women and children were murdered by rifle and machine gun fire in the course of a few minutes After such striking object lessons in the effectiveness of non resistance, the Congress could not prevent the outbreak of peasant revolts against imperialism and the landlord lackeys of the imperialists The Mohammadan Moplah peasants in the extreme south fought, arms in hand, for eight months against the British forces and their revolt was put down only after their villages had been laid waste and thousands shot down by the British troops

Not content with shooting down rebels, the British massacred their prisoners, as in the famous Moplah death train, when a trainload of prisoners was suffocated to death in conditions far surpassing the horrors of the famous black hole of Calcutta The Moplah revolt had an echo in the far north with a rising among the Sikhs Just as the Moplahs fought not only the British but the Hindu money lenders and landlords, so the Sikh movement was directed equally against the priests and temples These open armed revolts were accompanied by a great un organised peasant movement of refusal to pay rent and taxes

But the years 1918 21 are most remarkable in the history of the Indian revolutionary movement for the tremendous part which the Indian workers began to play in the political life of the country Even during the imperialist war a rapid growth of the workers' movement could be noticed In 1916 there was a general strike of textile workers and the first half of 1917 saw a big strike wave which affected 120 thousand workers

In 1918 21 the country was shaken by a number of lengthy mass strikes They broke out stormily and were almost always accompanied by bloody conflicts with police and troops In Bengal alone for nine months of 1920 21 130 strikes took place in which 2,600,000 working days were lost In 1920 the first congress of Indian trade unions was called, uniting 500 thousand workers, while at the second congress in December, 1921, over a million organised workers were represented

A great part of the politicians at that time leading the move

ment of the Indian proletariat, were agents of the national bourgeoisie, who under pressure of the working masses, began to come out with various " left " phrases. They talked about the growth of Bolshevism in India, and even about " the internal enemy," meaning the Indian bourgeoisie as well as British imperialism.

Nevertheless, the growth of this powerful workers' movement, combined with the growing discontent of the peasantry, often breaking out into open revolts, thoroughly frightened the Indian national bourgeoisie and compelled it to capitulate before British imperialism.

The two camps of the Indian revolution were becoming clear. On the one hand, in the camp of counter-revolution, the British imperialists and their lackeys, the Indian princes, landlords and money-lenders, the trading bourgeoisie and finally, hesitatingly, but certainly, the bourgeoisie and that section of the petty bourgeoisie which it had subordinated to its leadership. On the other hand, the camp of national revolution, the heroic Indian proletariat, the masses of savagely exploited toiling peasantry, the town and village poor, the poorer students. In desperate fear before these millions whose minds were becoming clearer as to who was their friend and who was their foe, every day that the struggle lasted, the National Congress with Gandhi at its head, hastened to their first great betrayal of the Indian revolution.

The peasant movement had become a mass one of refusal to pay rents and taxes and was directed with as much force against the Indian landlords as against the British imperialists. It was at its height in the district of Bardoli in Bengal. On Gandhi's insistence, a committee of the Congress hastened to Bardoli and " liquidated " the conflict, roundly rating the rebellious peasants and assuring the Zemindars and landlords of India that Congress had " no intention of encroaching on their legal rights." Gandhi, his heart at peace, went off to prison for the enjoyment of that " quiet and physical rest which I have earned," as he put it himself.

In 1922 Gandhi finally yielded all his positions to the English Government and betrayed the struggle of the Indian masses. The National Congress agreed to work the reforms of 1919 and from this time on its role in the struggle of the Indian people becomes more and more openly counter-revolutionary, although certain of its leaders like Das, Bose and the two Nehrus succeeded to some extent in deceiving the masses by their

"revolutionary" phraseology. The ensuing period of "peaceful co-operation" was, however, remarkable for the development in this period of the class struggle, and the consciousness that the Indian proletariat was more and more coming forward as the only possible leader of the popular masses in the battle for freedom.

The Development of the Working-Class Movement

In this period groups of Communist workers and intellectuals began the work of organising the working class of India independently of the National Reformist Congress. Starting in 1924, a number of strikes in the textile factories of Bombay and Calcutta and on the most important railways, took place. These strikes brought something new into the Indian revolutionary movement, for they were directed both against the native capitalist and against British imperialism. The masses were beginning to understand Gandhi's role in the national struggle. In 1924 the first Indian Communists were arrested and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment at Cawnpore. Their arrest, taking place when the first Labour Government of MacDonald was in power in England, perfectly clearly showed the close relations of English reformism and English imperialism. The persecution and arrest of their leaders could not stop the growth of the Indian workers' movement, and from 1928 the All-Indian Trade Union Congress began to come under revolutionary influence. In March, 1929, the Government again arrested the revolutionary leaders of the trade unions and workers' political movement. They were put on trial at Meerut under the accusation of "conspiring to overthrow the King Emperor."

The Meerut *Conspiracy* Case

The arrests took place at the climax of the greatest strike wave in Indian history. 31 million working days were lost in 1928 affecting the Tata Steel Works, the Calcutta jute workers and city scavengers, the Lilloa railway shops, the Southern Indian railway men, and finally, beginning in April, the famous six months' strike of 150,000 Bombay textile workers. The millowners tried to enforce a 7½ per cent. reduction on a weekly wage of 7s. Against this, the workers, led by the militant Girni Kamgar (Red Flag) Union with its 60,000 members, demanded a wage increase and trade union recognition.

On the eve of the publication of the Government report which granted many of the workers' demands, 31 leaders of the trade

union movement were arrested with a great display of military force and moved at once from Bombay to Meerut, many hundreds of miles away, being thereby deprived of their right to trial by jury. They included the whole of the executive of the Girni Kamgar Union, leaders of the jute and scavengers' strikes in Calcutta, members of the executive of the various rail unions, a former president of the Indian T.U.C. and editors of labour papers. Three Englishmen were among them.

Arrested in March, 1929, their trial finished only in January, 1933*, with the imposition of savage sentences, which aroused the opinion of the whole world against the infamous character of the prosecution. One of the accused died in prison, three were acquitted, the rest sentenced to a total of 170 years of penal servitude. No acts against the State, other than the organisation of trade unions and the leadership of strikes, were alleged or proved against the prisoners. It was sufficient that a number were Communists and that the others had been associated with them. Even the Communist Manifesto of Marx and Engels, written in 1847, was used as evidence against them. Clearly the aim of the prosecution was to suppress all forms of political and trade union organisation of the Indian working class other than those subsidised and controlled by the Government itself through its agents.

The courage of the majority of the prisoners, the fact that three are Englishmen, the infamous manner in which the trial was conducted, making it unique in the annals of human persecution, the treatment of the men in prison and the monstrous sentences, have combined to make Meerut at once a symbol of the character of British rule in India and of the forces which will overthrow it. Romain Rolland has said of them :

"They are for us the living symbol of those thousands of victims in the great combat which to-day is being fought throughout the world to break the yoke of imperialism. All these victims make a victory, for they bear witness to the iniquity which is crushing them, and to the irresistable rising of the new revolutionary forces which are awakening mankind."

The second "Labour" Government of Macdonald, coming to power a few weeks after the arrests, must bear the full responsibility for the Meerut atrocity. On their instigation the prisoners were denied the right to summon witnesses or advisers

*The Allahabad High Court on appeal quashed a number of convictions and reduced considerably the sentences of the remainder.

from England, a further arrest, that of the young journalist Hutchinson, was made, and the prisoners, though ill and suffering from the horrible climate of the Indian plains, consistently refused bail or proper facilities for defence

Indian Trade Unions and Strikes

The Indian working class as a whole began its battle against imperialism and its native capitalist class in the period 1919 22 But the strike movement in these years was still spontaneous, the trade union organisations of the workers only began to grow in the struggle, while class political organisations were absent altogether The strike wave weakened in the following years, rising to great heights again in 1928 and 1929 1928 saw a great general strike of the Bombay textile workers out of which grew the Girni Kamgar, India's first Red Trade Union At the same time the growing influence of the Indian Communists, still expressed through the medium of legal "Workers' and Peasants' Parties,' was able to give a direct political character to the Bombay movement and a big demonstration of Bombay workers was made against the landing of the Simon Commission In July, August and September of 1929, the strike wave all over India reached its height In July, 408,000 workers were on strike

The Indian Trade Union Congress is an organisation of the bureaucracy of the Indian trade unions Despite the fact that the revolutionary delegates in the Congress have had sufficient influence at the Nagpur Conference in 1929, to defeat the open agents of English imperialism such as Joshi and Chaman Lal, preventing any affiliation to Amsterdam, yet they have been unable owing to lack of contact with the masses in the unions and the factories, to prevent an even more dangerous enemy of the Indian workers gaining big influence This is the group of "left" national reformists, Bose, Nehru the younger, Ruikar, the railwaymen's leader, Kandalkar, leader of the split section of the Girni Kamgar Union, the Communist renegade Roy, etc This section, the agents of the Congress and national bourgeoisie, carries on a dangerous demagogic agitation, talking of "revolution" "socialist India," setting up from the Congress and renegade groups, a "Revolutionary Workers' Party," forming factory committees and so on, while in practice betraying strike after strike, accepting conciliation boards, "courts of inquiry," and all the machinery of capitalist deception which the reformists of the West know how to use so well In 1931 this group managed to split the Trade Union Congress at Cal

cutta, making a united front with the agents of imperialism against the revolutionary workers.

Nevertheless, despite the weakness of its revolutionary leadership, their lack of contact with the factories and the masses in the reformist unions, despite the demoralisation caused by the "left" and the renegade Roy, the Indian working class has carried on in the last three years a fierce and brave struggle. In Bombay, Sholapur, Nagpur, Kalak, the Indian workers showed in 1930 and 1931 that they were capable of not only defensive but offensive struggles. In Sholapur they fought not only against the soldiers and police of imperialism, but against the volunteers of the National Congress. A new portent has appeared with the strikes of agricultural labourers in Tirpur, South India and the heading of a peasants' movement in Berar by agricultural labourers. The revolutionary union of the Bombay textile workers showed that it was reviving lost positions by leading victorious strikes, in separate mills, while in 1932 the long dockers' strike and the successful refusal to load munitions on the Transport "Lancashire," showed the movement to be rising to a still higher level.

The most interesting feature of the workers' movement in 1933 was undoubtedly the strikes in the textile mills at Ahmedabad. Ahmedabad was where Gandhi first tried his skill as an arbitrator in the class struggle, in the years immediately after the war, helping to impose large cuts on the half-starved weavers. The mill-owners of this town have been the most generous contributors to his funds, and its workers have for some time been under his spell. So when in the summer of 1933 big strikes broke out for the restoration of wage cuts and trade union recognition, the shock to this citadel of industrial peace was great. Mr. S. K. Rudra, one of the mill-owners, was even forced to cry out in vexation that "Undiluted Marxian ideology is filtering into the heads of the working masses and some day this is bound to show itself in inevitable consequences."

A great deal of work is yet to be done, however, before the Indian workers create a mass trade union movement and their own political party. A real workers' Press, which can not only play a great role in rallying and organising the workers, but also expose those elements who would *disorganise* them by tying them to the tail of the capitalist National Congress, has still to be built up. The revolutionary elements have not yet sufficiently understood that to combine their efforts to Bombay

or Calcutta is not sufficient, that they must become a national force, building the unity of the workers from below in factory and trade union The great army of agricultural labourers, plantation and seasonal workers, has also to be reached and organised

The Indian Workers and the National Struggle

The Indian workers, though they are called upon to lead the struggle of their country for national freedom, and eventually to take it into the path of socialist development, can only do so by linking their fight with that of the peasantry Enough has been written to show that the immediate problem in India is this peasant problem, an agrarian revolution The recent risings in Kashmir and Alwar, the constant civil war in the villages against the money lender and rent collector, show that the conditions for a peasant war in India are rapidly maturing On the North-West Frontier, the tribesmen, their whole economic life destroyed by British encirclement, have carried on a sporadic armed struggle ever since the Afridi rising of 1930, when 30,000 troops and seven air squadrons had to be mobilised against them It is in the combining of this peasant war with a workers' rising that the key to Indian liberation is to be found

History shows, from the experience of 1848 in Europe, from the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, from the events in China since 1926, that such a combination can only succeed if the workers are able to create for its leadership a revolutionary party, firmly based in Marxist doctrine A Communist Party was actually formed in India in 1923, but was rather a group of intellectuals attracted by a new theory than a party of revolutionary workers, and soon died away From 1928 onwards secret groups of Communists, workers and intellectuals, began to be formed, who aimed at organising an all India Communist Party, but it was not till 1931 that the party was actually formed, and adopted a "Draft Platform of Action," the programme of the Indian Revolution

A Programme of Action

The programme clearly points out the character of the Indian revolution as an anti-imperialist revolution, aimed against British imperialism and the classes upon which it operates within the country, the feudal landlords and money lenders and merchants With these classes, with the whole landlord system, the Indian bourgeoisie is bound up, leading it to betrayal of the struggle for independence and of any radical solution of the agrarian

question. Its "opposition" manœuvres, its propaganda of non-violence, its effort to hold the workers under its influence, make it the greatest danger for the victory of the revolution.

The Indian revolution must destroy national slavery, free India from all the forces holding back its development, destroy the power of landlords and money-lenders, carrying through a radical solution of the agrarian question in the interests of the village proletariat, the poor and middle peasants. It must guarantee to the working class, the leader of the revolution, full freedom of development by a radical improvement of wages and conditions of labour. Therefore, says the programme, the present stage of the Indian revolution is that of the bourgeois democratic revolution, the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution, which can only be achieved by the overthrow of British rule as a result of a national uprising, and the setting up of a Soviet system, of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.

The only class in India which is consistently revolutionary to the end is the proletariat, but to organise this class as a force conscious of itself and its historical mission, to free it from subjection to the influence of national reformism, the Indian working class needs its own political party. In the fact that the working class, struggling by its proletarian class methods, under the leadership of its own revolutionary party, is beginning to lead the Indian national revolution, is the guarantee that that revolution, having accomplished its immediate aim of overthrowing imperialism and the feudal landlord structure of India, will not stand still. The leadership of the proletariat in the Indian revolution is the guarantee that Soviet India of the workers and peasants will not travel the road of capitalist development, but with the help of the world proletariat will struggle firmly and victoriously for a socialist proletarian road of development, to the final aim of Communism.

The Indian Communist Party puts forward the following fundamental slogans for the present stage of the revolution. First, full State independence of India by means of forcible overthrow of British rule, the annulling of all debts, expropriation of all English banks, factories, railways, plantations and shipping. Second, setting up of Soviet power, giving the right of self-determination, including separation, to all national minorities, the annihilation of native princedoms, the creation of an Indian federal workers' and peasants' Soviet Republic. Third, confiscation without compensation of all lands and

forests of the landlords, native princes, churches, English Government officials, and money-lenders and the handing over of them to the toiling peasantry, the annulling of all the slave and debt agreements to money-lenders and banks. Fourth, the eight-hour working day and radical improvement in labour conditions, the raising of wages and state insurance of the unemployed.

Two fundamental dangers face the Indian Communists. One is from the right, that of under-estimating or not correctly estimating the counter-revolutionary role of the national bourgeoisie, and especially of its " left " agents in the working class. The second is from the left, of isolating the party from the national anti-imperialist struggle, of identifying this struggle with the Congress and adopting a sectarian attitude. While the chief danger is the first, the second is also important, and the Indian Communists made this mistake in 1931. Fighting against both these forms of opportunism, their task now is to build their influence in the factories, to build the red trade union movement, to activise and give political life to the struggle of the masses, especially the strike struggle.

In Indian conditions, as formerly in Russia, a successful strike struggle has a tremendous revolutionary effect on the countryside, carrying the slogans of the national revolution, the example of successful fight, into the most backward and distant areas. " It would not be possible," wrote Lenin in 1905, " to draw in any way the wide masses of the exploited into the revolutionary movement, did not these masses see examples before them of how the wage workers of different sections of industry compelled the capitalists to immediate, swift improvement of their conditions." The developing of the economic strike into the political, against every atrocity and act of violence of the British, the connecting of the strike movement with great demonstrations, the bringing of the Red Flag, of revolutionary speeches and slogans to the widest masses, till finally the ground is prepared for an all-India general strike as the prelude to the struggle for the overthrow of British imperialism, these are the tasks of a revolutionary party in India.

Growth of the Economic Crisis

At the present time all the objective conditions for such a struggle are present in India. The crisis deepens, falling with especial force on colonial India. England attempts to save herself from the crisis at the expense of the working class at home and the colonial

masses abroad. Indian prices on goods exported to England have fallen catastrophically, but the prices on English industrial products exported to India have not fallen even half as much. Since the collapse of the pound sterling, England has repaid the loans then made by the U.S.A. and France by means of forcible exports of Indian gold to London. In 1931, 118 million dollars of gold were exported, but in the five months of October, 1931, to March, 1932, alone, the amount of exported gold reached 180 million dollars. The gold comes partly from the bourgeoisie and landlords, but chiefly from the town petty-bourgeoisie, the richer peasantry and to some extent the middle peasantry. Every Indian tries to get for himself and his family a few ornaments of gold and silver, and even the poorest peasant will have a silver ornament. This hoard of gold and silver is the reserve of the Indian masses against all elemental catastrophes. It is this reserve which the English are gathering up and exporting, a policy made worse by the fact that silver also is now taken away from the country. The forcible tying of the rupee to the pound sterling has also acted as a means for keeping the Indian market a British monopoly, since it is now almost essential for the Indian capitalist to place his orders in England.

An interesting light on the effects of the crisis on the main Indian producer, the cultivator, is given in an article in the *Times*, of June 8th, 1933. The article, which is explaining the recent 75 per cent. duty placed on non-British cotton goods imported into India, points out that British exports of cotton goods have fallen from 1,263 million yards in 1929 to 542 million yards in 1932. Although part of this drop is undoubtedly due to Japanese competition, it is so in relatively small degree. The causes are deeper and more alarming for imperialism.

"The basic factor," says the article, "is undoubtedly the economic one. The Indian consumer is receiving prices for his jute, cotton, tea, cereals, hides, and oilseeds that fall short of pre-war rates. This fall in the prices of agricultural goods has affected the value of the national income in India. According to information issued from New Delhi by the Department of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, the income of the cultivator in 1931-32 was reduced by almost one-half compared with 1928-29. As the bulk of the population in India lives on agriculture, this decline has a significant bearing on the purchasing power of the people. This purchasing power is further reduced by the fact that the cultivator, who is the ultimate consumer, has certain specific cash payments to make,

such as rent, water rates, and nterest to the *bannias*,* whatever his crops may fetch."

So the peasant, who in normal times barely receives enough to live by, has seen his income reduced by half, while imperialism and its feudal allies, the landlord and money-lender, continue to exploit him as before. It is no wonder that after the failure of the 1933 monsoon, the Gujerat peasantry are faced with famine, and that in the Bhir district of Bombay, famine is actually raging, for the relief of which the Government sanctioned the princely sum of 1,200 rupees. In the United Provinces and elsewhere floods have ruined many hundreds of villages, whose inhabitants, having no longer any courage or incentive to repair the havoc, are deserting the land in thousands, crowding into the towns, or lying out to starve in their ruined fields. The vernacular press contains frequent accounts of attacks on landlords and moneylenders, the burning of their houses and farms. British troops are " showing the flag " in long marches through the affected areas, piling ruin on ruin, since the pauperised peasants must pay for their food and lodging. Police punitive expeditions follow the " red cock " of agrarian arson. The condition of the Indian masses has become unbearable.

*Native moneylenders.

Chapter VII

BRITISH IMPERIALISM IN AFRICA

Egypt, the Land of Cotton

Egypt is the Empire cotton base. Together with its vast hinterland in the Sudan, it has been turned into a cotton tributary for Lancashire. In this respect it is a peculiar example of imperialist exploitation, for nowhere else in the Empire has a whole huge country been *turned over to the cultivation of one single crop.* True, big areas in other countries have been made areas of "monoculture," but Egypt and the Sudan are the only countries which have been turned almost wholly over to the culture of one crop. This means that the fate of their peasantry is entirely bound up with the fate of cotton on the world market. In addition, Egypt has proved a valuable market for the export of capital, British investments being as large as £100 millions sterling.

The history of the British occupation of Egypt is a long story of treachery, intrigue and unfulfilled promises. It is built on the worst forms of feudal exploitation of the peasantry, and accompanied by bloody repression of the national liberation movement. Even before the world imperialist war a national movement began in Egypt, control over which was gained by the Egyptian bourgeoisie. In so far as the peasantry were concerned, it was suppressed by mass hangings and floggings of a brutality hardly equalled even by the sadism of Tsar Nicholas and his generals.

In 1914, England, having completely suppressed all movements for independence, declared a protectorate over Egypt and occupied the whole country with British armies. The Suez Canal became a military base for British plans of conquest in the Near East. 1919 saw the outbreak of a mass anti-British movement all over Egypt, the leadership of which was in the hands of the Wafd, the party of the bourgeois nationalists.

Despite the bourgeois leadership which sought to divert the revolution into a compromise with imperialism, a tremendous role was played by the masses of Egyptian peasantry who

clearly saw that compromise with British imperialism was impossible On the peasantry had fallen the chief burden of the war through the brutal exploitation of the English and the native landlords, who, in order to supply British imperialism with cotton for war needs had literally bled them white The peasantry had in addition been forced in their thousands into labour batallions, to build canals, roads and trenches for the British occupation forces, their cattle and grain requisitioned, and they returned home to their villages to face economic ruin in the post war crisis, when the demand for cotton fell catastrophically For the first time now the Egyptian peasantry began to find an alternative leader to the bourgeoisie, for the small Egyptian proletariat came onto the scene, the first trade unions were organised and the germs of a revolutionary workers' party formed

The sharpness of the post war crisis forced the Wafd to play a roll of radical "opposition" to British imperialism, otherwise it would have been impossible to hold back the rising tide of national revolution The British replied as usual, by machine guns and armoured cars, mass arrests and the exile to Malta of Zaghlul Pasha, the leader of the Wafd At the same time, influenced by the deep nature of the revolutionary movement, they made a minimum of concessions to the Egyptian bourgeoisie

In 1922 the British Protectorate was abolished and Egypt became an "independent" State—on paper The country remained in the occupation of British troops, its foreign policy was under British control, the Sudan remained a British colony, although formally both England and Egypt were supposed to share in its administration Since all the sources of the Nile are in the Sudan, British imperialism, so long as it holds the Sudan can control the whole economic life of Egypt

Egypt and the Labour Governments

When, in 1924, MacDonald's Labour Government came to power, the Egyptian nationalists began to negotiate through Zaghlul Pasha, who had just returned from exile Zaghlul tried to obtain concessions from the Labour Government on four points which in 1922 the English had refused even to discuss, i e (1) the ending of the military occupation of Egypt, (2) the abolition of control over foreign policy, (3) the abolition of the special courts for dealing with foreigners in Egypt, (4) the abolition of the Protectorate over the Sudan The Labour Government refused to make any

concessions on these four points and the discussions were broken off.

After this the Egyptian King, a mere tool of the British, on the secret orders of the Labour Government, dissolved the Egyptian Parliament and began to rule as a dictator, though, of course, the real dictators remained as before, the King's British "advisers." This act of imperialist brigandage from the Labour Government called forth a new wave of the Nationalist movement. The Governor of the Sudan, the English General Stack, was shot in Cairo and the Egyptian regiments in the Sudan mutinied, whereupon they were disarmed by the British and the Sudan proclaimed a British colony.

Since this time Egypt has been ruled by the King and his British advisers, save for one short interval in 1929, when the Wafd again began negotiations with the second Labour Government. Mr. Henderson worked out a new treaty which he proposed to the Egyptian nationalists. This treaty slightly changed the external forms of British rule while leaving the essence of it untouched.

However, since 1924 big changes had taken place inside the Wafd. Now a peace-making and amiable mood towards British imperialism prevailed in the party and only the extremely difficult economic position of Egypt prevented it from accepting Henderson's proposals. The Wafd represents an alliance of the interests of the Egyptian landlords and merchants and therefore when the crisis brought a catastrophic fall in the price of cotton, the raw material around which turns the whole economic life of Egypt, the Wafd was forced to take steps which were contrary to the interests of British imperialism. In order to hold up the price of cotton, the Egyptian bourgeoisie began to buy it up in great quantities and to form big cotton reserves. Britain's reply was swift and immediate. In the summer of 1930, having received the necessary hint from the Labour Government, King Fuad again dismissed parliament and re-established his personal dictatorship.

The Wafd after a few weak efforts to resist the Anglo-Egyptian reaction had to compromise with the existing order. The desperate economic conditions of the country made them terribly afraid of exciting active movements from the peasantry by some careless step on their part. The Labour Government, declaring its neutrality in words towards the dispute between the King and the Wafd, in fact supported the former, at the most critical moment sending battleships to Alexandria. The

Government, nevertheless, warned the King to refrain from any repressive measures against the Wafd since the party might still be used if the British imperialists considered it necessary to start again negotiations with the Egyptian " people," i.e., the bourgeoisie, in order to prevent a workers' and peasants' rising at this vital point of the communications of the Empire.

The Workers' and Peasants' Movements

The end of 1930 and the beginning of 1931 saw a rise in the working-class movement in Egypt. There was a great strike in the railway workshops of Cairo and a transport strike leading to armed conflicts with troops and police. This young and still weak workers' movement, under the leadership of the Egyptian Communist Party, has before it a very great task in leading the peasant masses of Egypt and the Sudan in the struggle for national freedom against British imperialism and its lackeys, the Egyptian landlords, money-lenders and merchants.

The position of the Egyptian peasant, the fellah, is indeed a desperate one. Imperialism has made Egypt a country of a single culture, cotton. *The collapse of cotton prices due to the* crisis means practical slavery for the cotton-producing Egyptian peasant, bound to his little parcel of land as surely as by chains. In Egypt, 1,428,000 peasants farm not more than an acre, and 579,000 from 1 to 5 acres. The narrow valley of the Nile contains a teeming population who must struggle for the smallest scrap of land, making of it not only a paradise for English tourists but for the native money-lender and feudal landlord. The fellah has to pay for his land, for his water, for his manure, for the loan that enables him to carry on from harvest to harvest, so that for himself and his family there only remains the barest minimum.

*King Fuad was forced to reduce rents by one-third, but mean-*while the price of cotton fell one-half and the fellah was worse off than before. In vain, Lancashire, seeking to escape from the crisis at the expense of her colonies, calls for cheaper cotton. Cotton cannot be produced more cheaply without disturbing the whole feudal money-lending structure of Egypt, without an agrarian revolution, for the fellah, once such a burden of compulsion is lifted off his back, will refuse any longer to sell the produce of his labour in exchange for less than the bare means of existence, as at present. Imperialism cannot escape from the contradictions of its own making.

The West African Colonies

If Egypt is the most important British colony in Africa both from the economic and military point of view, there are other colonies far ahead of it in extent of territory and size of population. For example in West Africa, Nigeria has a population of 1,876,690, almost a million more than that of Egypt, while the total population of all the West African colonies, Nigeria, Gold Coast, Gambia and Sierra-Leone, is about 22 millions, the overwhelming majority of whom are Negroes. The majority of the West African population is engaged in agriculture, though Nigeria has already a considerable proletariat, dockers and railway workers, miners and a small number of factory workers engaged on the working up of agricultural products for export. The West African proletariat, particularly the miners, works in conditions of forced labour, very little distinguished from slavery. In some cases, as for example the workers of the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation, the Corporation has complete control, not only over its own workers, but over the whole hundred square miles of territory which it exploits. The writ of the British Government, for whatever that counts, does not run in the Ashanti Goldfields.

In the towns and particularly in the seaports, a native negro bourgeoisie consisting of traders and landlords has grown up. This bourgeoisie is the servant of the imperialist rulers in the fullest sense of the word.

The African colonies with the exception of Egypt are so-called Crown colonies, that is to say they are administered by officials appointed by the King and responsible only to the Secretary of State for the colonies. The so-called method of " indirect rule " is adopted in West Africa, that is to say, the officials operate through the tribal leaders or in Northern Nigeria through the Emirs, as the feudal landlords of this country are known. The Governor of the colony has an elected council who act as his " advisers." In Nigeria there are even a handful of representatives of the native landlord-trading bourgeoisie in this council.

The revenue of the administration is obtained by means of a head tax on the peasantry, or a land tax in certain cases, and customs duties at the ports. The whole economic life of the West African colonies is, in fact, under the control of the great oil and cocoa trusts, of which Unilever and British Chemical Industries are the most prominent. It is the trusts who fix the prices for palm oil and coco-nuts and they have an absolute

monopoly over the whole internal trade of the colonies The union of these trusts with the British administration was clearly shown in the struggle which broke out in 1929 in Bathurst, the capital of Gambia Levers in Bathurst dismissed all their workers who were members of trade unions, including the sailors and engineers of the river and coastal traffic steamers The Governor of the colony refused to recognise the legality of the trade unions and used the local garrison against the strikers as a result of which over forty workers were wounded Only an almost complete general strike forced the Governor to recognise the trade union, whilst the trust had to increase the wages of its workers

The Women's Rising in Nigeria

Even more interesting, and much more horrible in its effects, was the movement which began in the Calabar and Owerri provinces of Nigeria in December, 1929, among the peasant women This was such a remarkable movement, and one so typical of imperialist exploitation in a backward country that it is worth while telling in some detail Here again is a country in which, as on the Indian North West Frontier, patriarchal tribal society is being forcibly broken up and a feudal exploiting upper class is being formed in the tribes by the British administration These so-called "warrant chiefs" and "court members," are in most cases not even members of the old hereditary ruling families, but simply those who have "rendered services ' to the white occupation forces The people of the tribes suffering under this new form of exploitation, foreign to their ancient social organisation, are also brought into direct contact with modern capitalism in the ports and big towns where they bring their produce to market

In the old Nigerian society, women had extraordinary authority and importance, being considered the complete equals of men But the old society is breaking up and as the British themselves have had to notice, the process is accompanied by a sharp class differentiation and class struggle inside the villages The "elders," members of the old secret societies who formerly controlled economic life, have no longer any authority, and new societies of "young" people definitely hostile to the elders have been formed, whose membership is made up from the poorer peasants and toiling elements They are hositle to the chiefs because the latter help the Government in the collection of taxation sit in the corrupt and inefficient "native courts '

set up by the British, and generally appear as their agents. A British official, in his memorandum on the disturbances, has the following interesting remark on the women's movements and their secret societies (the chief of which seems only to have been formed in 1918, in the first post-war crisis):

"There appear to be indications that some of the women's movements, which have arisen from time to time are not by any means unconnected with analogous associations among the young men and their political aims. The "Ogbo" organisations seem to exhibit distinctly subversive tendencies and to conflict with the older orders. Though their demands in some cases appear to be reactionary, it is doubtful whether their purpose is so to the extent at first sight apparent. Taking for instance, the demand for change of the present Native Courts system and for cases to be settled in the towns and villages according to ancient custom, this, though eminently plausible in many respects, may be dictated by a tendency to associate Native Courts with authority in general and the system of taxation in particular."

The English bureaucrat, carefully penning his memorandum of excuse for the atrocities of his countrymen, has described in a short paragraph the first stage of every anti-imperialist revolt among primitive peoples. Capitalism breaks up their old society, accelerates and accentuates the creation of class differences, brings little or no compensation for the life it destroys. The first desperate aim of people oppressed by such a system, is to demand a return to the old life which they understand. In Nigeria many things led to this first spontaneous mass outbreak against imperialism. The United Africa Company, a part of the great Unilever trust, was giving year by year progressively lower prices for the native produce, and the appearance of an American speculator who by forming a co-operative through which the natives might get higher prices, thus breaking their monopoly, seems to have caused much unrest. Then the Africa Company local agents suddenly started buying by weight instead of by measure, apparently in many cases grossly cheating the natives. The immediate cause, however, was fear of new taxation, especially a tax on women. It is admitted that in many places taxation was already too high, and rumours of a new tax, combined with oppressive and clumsy methods by the tax surveyors, proved to be the last straw.

The women, splendidly organised in their societies, collected

together and marched from town to town, demonstrating against the rumoured taxation, against the United Africa Company factories, and the Native Courts, the local agents of imperialism A few courts were burnt, some factory windows smashed, a handful of Europeans hustled and frightened, and some unpopular chiefs beaten up, nothing more Yet at various places troops fired on the women, in one place with a Lewis gun, and altogether 43 were killed, 50 wounded, the high proportion of killed being due to the close range in every case Only in one case did the subsequent inquiry find that firing was "justified," and even here that it might have been avoided

The British officers who ordered the massacre made astonishing statements in their evidence The chief crimes of the women, who were unarmed except for a few sticks, seem to have been that some of them were old and ugly and naked, and that others were painted and got up in a "warlike manner" They also appeared "hysterical" In other words these officers and gentlemen were badly frightened by a crowd of unarmed women, and shot them down in a vile and brutal manner

Lord Passfield, the Labour Colonial Secretary, found this action "justified" The official enquiry, in every case but one, found it unjustified Needless to say, despite the enquiry findings, no officer was punished for this hideous crime, while many native villages, on the other hand, were fined very large sums

The story of this women's movement against imperialism, personified by the United Africa Company and the riflemen of the Nigeria Regiment, is so horrible in all its details, and so typical of colonial development and policy (in various ways the same history has been repeated over and over again in every colony), that we have described it in some detail It only remains to add, to show the unbroken continuity of that policy, that it took place in a "model" colony, under a Labour Government, and that the massacre was justified by that Government

How an "Enlightened" Policy Works

It is strange indeed, that apologists of imperialism should insist that West Africa is a triumph of good government and of enlightened policy towards the peasantry Here, peasant proprietorship is supposed to exist, and the money lender to be unknown In fact, the land systems of West Africa vary very greatly and are extremely complicated, but none of them resembles any known system of peasant proprietorship In certain colonies the local chieftains

have been made into landlords who, in addition to receiving the surplus product of the peasantry, have a right to be paid the so-called tribal dues, in others a whole class of new landlords has been created, who either exploit the peasantry directly through wage labour or else on the share-cropping system, while in Northern Nigeria, where the most sweeping "land reform" has been carried through, the aim of the Government being to set up a kind of State peasantry, native landlordism is growing very rapidly, and with it that same money-lending, or what is practically its equivalent, which is supposed to be absent in the African colonies. In this way the West African peasant is becoming almost as much under the yoke of the money-lender as his Indian brother.

The whole system of native tribal relations has been broken up by the British, a native landlord class created where it did not formerly exist, while the old feudal laws and patriarchal rule have been maintained in full force and even strengthened. For example, in Ashanti before the British came, the peasant paid in tribal dues about the produce of one day's work in a year. After the coming of the British and the erecting of the chiefs into servants of the Government, it was decided that as the chief's responsibility had increased, so also had his expenses, and that consequently the chief's dues must be now exacted in a much more reliable way than before. So to-day, a peasant who takes up land among an alien tribe has to make a return of no less than one-third of his crops. This has been later reduced to one-tenth, but there is a considerable difference between one-tenth and the product of one day's work.

In all the West African colonies there has been wholesale expropriation of the native lands. Some of these have gone in mining concessions, some in plantations, for there are plantations in West Africa, but the greater part in the shape of forest reserves, particularly of the immensely valuable mahogany tree. West Africa is a typical example of a colony formerly living largely in a state of primitive tribal society, or the early stages of feudalism, compelled by imperialism to cultivate single technical crops, chiefly vegetable oils, for the world market. If the crop fails the peasant is completely ruined, and has no alternative but the money-lender with his 100 per cent. interest, or practical slavery as a share cropper or worker in the mines. Such is the "brilliant" administration of those ideal colonies in West Africa.

The Slave Colonies of East Africa

East Africa forms a completely different picture. Here the colonies are far greater in area, but, for a very good reason, much more sparsely populated. In the whole huge territory of Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, Nyassaland, Somaliland and North Rhodesia there is a population of just 13 millions. The reason of this is simply and solely the appalling exploitation of the negro population by their British rulers, which is driving them rapidly along the road to total extinction. Much has been made of the horrors of the Arab slave traders in East Africa, as exposed by pious missionaries like Livingstone. But those horrors are nothing to those perpetrated by the "civilised gentlemen" for whom Livingstone prepared the way.

The land in these colonies has been simply confiscated by the British colonists without any pretence of legal form, and the whole native population expropriated. There are here no sham systems of peasant proprietorship but simply vast slave plantations worked by forced labour. The labour is obtained in the following way: Certain limited and unproductive tracts of land are set aside as "reserves" for the native tribes. The tribes, unable to keep themselves from starvation on these tracts, are compelled to send their surplus population to work on the colonists' plantations. Here they are simply worked to complete exhaustion and rarely live to return back to the tribal reserve. Corporal punishment, even murder, of the plantation workers, is a frequent thing, and goes completely unpunished. But such a system, like the slave system of the cotton planters of the Southern States of America, can only be kept up if there is an inexhaustible supply of labour to take the place of the too rapidly worn-out plantation workers, and East Africa is destroying its own supply.

This situation has led to a "disagreement" between the planters and the more far-sighted home Government, which pleads for more scientific methods of exploitation of the remaining reserves of labour. The planters, however, secure in making quick and large profits by the present system, which does not require too great sums of capital invested in the estates, since the variable capital costs them practically nothing, are violent supporters of the prevailing system. They propose to guarantee its permanency by creating an "East African Federation" of all the East African colonies except Somaliland. Needless to say, the Government of the East

African colonies, particularly of Kenya, is entirely in the hands of the white planters and of the governors, who act in the closest concert with them. The number of white planters who have such unlimited power of life and death over 13 million natives, unarmed and herded like cattle into a pen, in their close, unhealthy reserves, is not more than 200 thousand in all.

Since the present area of the reserves with the rapidly decreasing population is no longer a guarantee that surplus labour will be forced to the plantations, the Government of Kenya has proposed the establishment of control over the reserves by means of special " Boards of Trustees " composed of officials and planters, without of course any representatives of the native population. This proposal met with strong resistance from the only existing native organisation, the Central Kikuyu Association. The Labour Government decided thereupon to make a " certain concession " to the natives, and proposed to limit the lease by which a European can hold land in the reserves to thirty-three years. Unfortunately they did not have the courage to make this proposal law, in face of the planters' opposition, so that with the fall of the Labour Government the position remained unchanged.

The Governor of Kenya threatened to close down the Central Kikuyu Association and, calling together a special meeting of the natives in the largest reserve, declared that the Government would " take measures " against all who " refused to obey the chief and his elders (who are paid Government officials), and instead listened to representatives of such seditious societies as the Central Kikuyu Association." The Government then forbade the carrying out of any collections among the natives which would have allowed them to send a further deputation to London or carry on some kind of agitation, and also impressed upon the negroes that on meeting members of the Central Kikuyu Association they should behave to them as they would to " the hyenas who ravish their herds at night."

It was during the enlightened rule of the Labour Government that in the neighbouring colony of Uganda a detachment of armed police attacked a meeting of natives in a church, killing five and wounding 30.

The recent discovery of gold in the Kenya native reserves, threatens the few existing guarantees of life the people possess. Without hesitation the Government, with full approval this time of the home Government (it is a matter of gold, after all), broke ruthlessly all existing agreements to respect the native

land rights in the reserves A large area was at once seized for exploitation and its inhabitants driven with their flocks to the scanty lands of neighbours A yet larger area has been marked off as available for future exploitation Adequate labour from the landless and helpless natives is in this way assured This cool act of robbery and murder (for it is murder to deprive a man of his land and means of livelihood) has sealed the fate of the wretched people of Kenya, as surely doomed to extinction, or to complete slavery to the white settlers, as the Indian tribes of North America

The tasks of the revolutionary movement in Africa are complicated and difficult owing to the primitive development of the native peoples and the lack of a native proletariat A really strong native proletariat exists only in the dominion of South Africa and, even so, the fact that the native worker is invariably isolated in compounds which are often surrounded by armed guards and even by electrified barbed wire fences, that he is deprived of even the most elementary education, worked almost to death, compelled to submit to the most degrading conditions such as finger print registration and so on, makes the building up of a revolutionary party an extraordinarily difficult task The responsibility of the working class in Great Britain towards the African masses, particularly to the small band of working class revolutionaries in South Africa, becomes, therefore, extremely grave.

Chapter VIII

THE NEAR-EASTERN COLONIES

The new Empire in the Near East

The last group of British colonies consists of the former possessions of the Turkish Empire in the Near East, Palestine, Trans-Jordania and Irak, obtained as part of the plunder of the imperialist war. They are ruled under League of Nations mandates and have an immense importance for the British Empire. Not only are the colonies profitable fields for exploitation in themselves, but they are a big step towards the attainment of the great dream of British imperialism, an "all red" route to India. The control of these countries not only gives Britain a commanding influence over the whole Arabian Peninsula, that is to say over the mouths of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, but it also completely surrounds Persia, the only remaining "gap" in the route. The Near Eastern colonies are a permanent threat to the independence of the Turkish Republic, a threat the British imperialists have continually tried to turn into a reality, and they are a military base not only against French or Italian expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean, but also, and in the first place, against the Soviet Union.

The population of Palestine is about 800 thousand of whom 650 thousand are Arabs and only 148 thousand Jews. In spite of such a disproportion between the races, during the imperialist war the British Government solemnly declared that Palestine must become a "national home" for the Jewish people, the so-called Balfour Declaration. By this manœuvre British imperialism counted on getting the support of the wealthy Jewish Zionists in the United States, as well as guaranteeing themselves a firm internal ally for the future domination of Palestine. The International Zionist Organisation, controlled by wealthy Anglo-American Jewish financiers has invested big sums in Palestine and seen to it that the best land in the country has been expropriated from the Arab peasantry for the Jewish capitalist farmers, the so-called "colonists." The

Mond Imperial Chemical Combine in the interests of "Jewish nationalism," exploits the tremendous phosphate deposits of Palestine, using for the purpose the landless Arab labourers.

The amount of land suitable for cultivation in Palestine amounts to about 3 million acres. Of this about 300 thousand acres of the very best land have been occupied by the Jewish colonists. The Jewish farms are in most cases purely capitalist enterprises employing wage labour, while no less than 60 per cent. of the labourers who work on these farms are landless Arabs. The British in Palestine have remained true to their traditional policy of divide and conquer and, in addition to the Jewish farmers, have purposely strengthened there the big Arab landlords, the sheiks, so as to have internal allies in the exploitation of the Arab peasantry as well as a force whom they can, when necessary, play off against the Jewish bourgeoisie.

The Zionists on their side, with the help of the Government, have consciously aimed at giving the Jewish workers emigrating to Palestine a privileged position. Arabs may not belong to the Jewish Federation of Trade Unions, with the exception of the railwaymen's union, and wage rates until recently were two or three times higher for Jewish workers than for Arab workers.

Nevertheless, the Zionists in spite of the support of British imperialism, have not been able to keep the economic level of the Jewish workers and poor colonists at the level they desired. Since the beginning of the economic crisis immigration into Palestine has almost ceased, while for the last three years the reverse phenomenon of Jewish emigration out of Palestine has been observed. The Arabian peasantry, ruined by the competition of the capitalist farms and the exploitation of their sheiks, are leaving the villages in large numbers and accumulating in the towns. In such conditions the level of life and labour of both Arab and Jewish workers grows steadily worse and unemployment grows among the Jewish as well as among the Arabian workers.

In August, 1929, a revolt of the Arab peasantry and town poor broke out against the Zionist bourgeoisie, the class ally of British imperialism. During the revolt 200 people were killed and 300 wounded chiefly by the British troops and gendarmerie, and, by direct orders of the Labour Government, nine Arab peasants were hanged and several hundred sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. The Palestine Communist Party and the revolutionary wing of the Arab nationalists tried to turn

this movement of the masses into an anti-imperialist struggle against both the Zionist bourgeoisie and the Arab landlords, and to some extent succeeded. Nevertheless, both Arab and Jewish bourgeoisie showed themselves true servants of British imperialism and made every effort to help in the suppressing of the rising, while the young Communist Party made a number of mistakes.

The Palestine Communist Party was then almost exclusively Jewish in composition and its then leadership had obstinately resisted all attempts to make it preponderatingly Arab, both in accordance with the preponderance of Arabs among the working class and farm labourers, and the position of Palestine as the centre of all the Arab countries. Only the events of the rising put an end to this state of affairs by forcing a change of leadership.

The Jewish persecutions in Fascist Germany, bringing with them a new flow of Jewish immigration, will undoubtedly create fresh problems for Palestine. A number of the immigrants, bringing fresh capital with them, will go to swell the ranks of the Jewish bourgeoisie, while the various relief funds, administered by Anglo-American financiers and industrialists, will strengthen considerably the possibilities for exploiting both the Jewish and Arab toiling population. The mass of new immigrants, having lost everything in Germany, will expect to find in Palestine the earthly paradise of Zionist propaganda. When they find instead that they are the poverty-stricken tools of British imperialism, their disillusion will be the greater. Nevertheless we may expect that attempts will be made to get the poor Jew to believe that it is the presence of the Arab which prevents his becoming prosperous in his new home. The responsibility of leading an anti-imperialist struggle for an independent Palestine with national freedom for both Jew and Arab, becomes very great and very difficult in the new circumstances.

Irak

After Palestine the most important of the Near-Eastern colonies is certainly Irak, with a population of 3 millions, important oil fields, and all the conditions for a big development of cotton plantations. In 1920 the English imposed on Irak, as King, their puppet the Emir Feisal of the Hashemite rulers of the Hedjaz, the close friend and ally of the notorious adventurer, Colonel Lawrence. The big Irak landlords and trading bourgeoisie were against Feisal, partly for religious reasons since

Feisal was a Sunni Mohammadan, whilst the greater part of the population of Irak is of the Shiite sect, but chiefly because the family to which he belongs was mistrusted throughout the Arab countries for its open support of British imperialism during the war of 1914 18 The peasantry of Irak, led by a section of their feudal chiefs, revolted against Feisal almost immediately after his enthronement and only after a long and difficult expedition by a British army was he finally forced upon the people He has only been able to keep his place since by means of British bayonets and aeroplanes, and the more disreputable weapons of poison, bribery and treachery

The chief importance of Irak is the oilfields around Mosul and the fact that it also gives a possibility for completely commanding the wells of the Anglo Persian Oil Company, a part Government owned concern, in Persian territory Cotton plantations have also been widely developed in the last years, while the total of English exports of capital has rapidly reached the value of £20 millions

A strong national anti British movement continues to exist in Irak, chiefly under the influence of the Arab trading bourgeoisie and a section of the discontented feudal sheiks In order to placate this movement and win over its leadership the British have many times promised to evacuate all armed forces from Irak, but up to now have never given any sign of an intention to carry out these promises effectively

According to its League of Nations Mandate, Britain had to give Irak independence, and the last garrisons were withdrawn in 1932, though the fortified air bases of the R A F remained The British left Irak very reluctantly and are making desperate efforts to find a pretext for occupying the country once again In order to do this, they are making clever use of the National question Two national minorities live in North West Irak, the nomad Kurds, and the Christian Assyrians The Assyrians have been made into a British mercenary force, while the Kurds, disillusioned in the "benefits" promised them by the British in return for stirring up trouble on the Turkish frontier, are violently anti British

British agents in the summer of 1933 caused the Assyrians, many of whom had left Irak for Syria the year before, to return and start an armed movement against the Irak government It was known that this would be brutally suppressed, as indeed it was, the Irak troops and Kurdish levies burning the Assyrian villages and shooting their populations down in the best style

of their British tutors. But the unhappy Assyrians had served their purpose.

Britain had left Irak on condition that national minorities were "protected." The massacre of the Assyrians was an affront to British "honour" and that notorious protector of the small nationalities, so well-beloved in India, Egypt and Ireland, now points out to the astonished world the awful results of the evacuation of Irak. Needless to say the pious British emphasise that the Assyrians are "Christians" massacred by Moslems, though they forget to add that their Nestorian Christianity has no more in common with Western forms than the Moslem faith, and that the Assyrians, like their co-religionists the Druses, are an exceedingly warlike people.

The centre of the Arab national movement is, however, in Palestine and Syria. There exists a national reformist organisation known as the "Arab Executive Committee," which carries on a wordy opposition to British imperialism. The fear of the Arab landlords and bourgeoisie before the growing class struggle of the Arab peasantry and Bedouin nomads is forcing them more and more into open alliance with imperialism. In 1928 a "left" anti-imperialist wing broke off from the Executive with a certain Hamdi Al Husein at its head and for a time attempted to win the leadership in the anti-imperialist movement. But these "lefts" had neither programme nor organisation, and when the crisis of 1930 brought masses of Arab workers and peasants into the liberation struggle, forcing the nationalists to declare their position more sharply, Hamdi's group came out openly as opponents of the agrarian revolution. Another split then took place and now at last a revolutionary Arab nationalist movement is beginning to be formed, aiming at a federation of all the Arab countries on the basis of the democratic agrarian revolution. These revolutionary nationalist elements are under the leadership of the Communist Parties of Syria and Palestine and in union with the toiling peasantry and poor nomads of the various Arab countries are struggling against British and French imperialism and Arab feudalism.

Chapter IX

THE MILITARY POLICY OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM

The Empire and War

The British Empire includes one whole continent, Australia, two thirds of Africa, one of the richest countries in Asia, India, the greater part of the Near East, and half of North America, Canada, as well as various islands and small dependent territories scattered all over the globe On this huge territory live numberless races and nationalities, several hundred millions of human beings But the European population of the British Empire is in a proportion of 1 to 10 of the whole

In the centre of this vast area is the small island of Great Britain representing in itself an economic system in decay, a striking example of the unequal development of capitalism If the British bourgeoisie have lost industrial supremacy to the United States and Germany, financial supremacy to the United States and partially to France, it remains nevertheless, still one of the most powerful imperialist bourgeoisies in the world, *thanks to its hold on the colonies and dominions* This work is not concerned with the question of the relations between the dominions and the metropolis, but it is necessary to point out that it would be the greatest political mistake to assume for one moment that the bourgeoisie of the dominions is in any way completely equal before the bourgeoisie of the metropolis Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the Irish Free State, the Union of South Africa, are held in a vice by British finance capital and any effort to secure a measure of real independence from that corpse like grip meets with only one answer—overwhelming economic and military pressure It is common, for example, to assume that Canada is no longer dependent on English but on American finance capital, an error which is the result of simply adding up the total of English and American investments This is to mistake quantity for quality Most of the commanding positions in Canadian economic life are still held by British finance capital, and the sharpness of

Anglo-American rivalry arises from the attempts to drive British imperialism from these positions.

Yet the dominions, whose native capitalism has few interesst in common with British capitalism, are bound to fight for economic independence. The Ottawa Conference, the sterling bloc, are signs not so much of Empire unity, as of mutual compromise in an uncertain phase of the struggle. The essential fact remains that the bourgeoisie of the metropolis, the productive forces of which decline year by year and month by month, is becoming more and more a complete parasite on the Empire. The Empire, though it still retains immense importance as a market for goods and a source of raw materials, becomes primarily a means of enrichment for the English rentier and the English banks. The example of Britain glaringly exposes the parasitic character of imperialism.

Such a position makes of the relations between the metropolis and the colonies, and the relation of the Empire as a whole to the outer world, a first-rate military problem. The decay of Britain taking place on the background of the general crisis of capitalism, means a corresponding increase in armaments and militarism. Britannia, the aged and diseased receiver of stolen goods, has to keep her trident well sharpened if she wants to retain her plunder. The world crisis has struck Britain particularly hard, and it is the colonies who have to suffer for it.

At the same time her greatest rival, the United States, is equally hard hit and the spectacle of all the richest regions in the world tied to decaying Britain is not calculated to soften the antagonism between the two.

Indeed, the growth of Anglo-American antagonism is the outstanding feature of the post-war world. It appears particularly sharply in the present period of economic crisis, of the complete failure of all efforts to bring about a peaceful settlement of the differences which are tearing the world of capitalism. The imperialist rivals see clearly that there is only one great area of the world which remains for capitalist exploitation—the Chinese Empire. Before the war the Turkish Empire held this enviable position, but China is the source of immensely greater potential wealth than Turkey. The situation is complicated by the fact that Japan has begun the re-dividing of China by the seizure of Manchuria. The next world war, even though it begin in the Polish Corridor and not in the Manchurian plains or valley of the Yang-Tse, will be a war for the control of the

Pacific and its territories in which the chief antagonists will be Britain, Japan and the U S A

This struggle for world leadership with America is not, however, the only difficulty against which British imperialism fights The battle for world supremacy to day no longer takes place, as did the old fight with Germany, *in a completely capitalist world* It develops on the background of a general crisis of the whole capitalist system

What does that mean?

"That means first of all that the imperialist war and its consequences has strengthened the decay of capitalism and broken its equilibrium, that we are now living in the epoch of wars and revolutions, that capitalism now no longer represents the sole and all embracing system of world economy, that, along with the capitalist system of economy, exists the socialist system, which grows, which flourishes, which is opposed to the capitalist system and which by the very fact of its existence, demonstrates the rottenness of capitalism, shakes its foundations That means further, that the imperialist war and the victory of the revolution in the U S S R have shaken the bases of imperialism *in the colonies and dependent* countries That the authority of imperialism in these countries is broken That it is no longer able to lord it as of old in these countries" (Stalin, *Political Report,* 16th Party Congress)

Colonial Revolt and the Soviet Union

Whilst in England itself there is developing a severe economic crisis threatening the very foundations of the country's economy, the imperialist bourgeoisie is unable to make the slightest economic concession to the ruined and starving colonial peasantry On the contrary, it is now forced to have recourse to new and worse forms of exploitation, which call forth from the colonial masses indignation and revolt These masses are now no longer in the position of being forced to blind, spontaneous revolt In the developing movement of the native working class, they are finding a leader, so that, given the help of the workers in Britain they can threaten the very existence of the White Terror Empire

There exists yet another, equally serious, threat to the continuance of the oppression of the millions of the colonial peasantry, their life of poverty, disease, hunger and enforced ignorance The November revolution in Russia has faced British imperialism with a whole series of new military and

political problems. The liberation of the oppressed nationalities of the former Tsarist Empire, the swift growth of the productive forces of these former Russian colonies in Asia, under the leadership of the proletarian State, the annihilation of the old Asiatic religious feudal money-lending society, the forcible uprooting of all remnants of the heavy oppression of Russian imperialism, the victorious construction of socialism in these countries which have not had to pass through the hell of capitalist development, all this is an unforgettable example for the oppressed peoples of the whole world.

It was for this reason that England took such an energetic part in the effort to crush the proletarian revolution at its very birth, to seize the former colonies of Turkestan and the Caucasus, but before the mass resistance of the workers and peasants of the invaded areas the counter-revolutionary intervention came to a miserable end. But the British imperialist bourgeoisie has ever since unswervingly prepared for a war of intervention on the Soviet Union, the citadel of the world proletariat, the symbol of freedom for the oppressed peoples of the world. The English General Staff looks upon its military political tasks in India only from the point of view of an aggressive offensive on the Soviet Union through Persia and Afghanistan. That the necessary military plans have been worked out is openly recognised by the officers of the General Staff of the British and Indian armies. A semi-official army text-book, *Imperial Military Geography*, by Major D. H. Cole, the handbook of every junior officer, contains some striking hints in this respect.

"It is more than likely that," writes Major Cole, "at any threat of a Russian invasion of Afghanistan, India would be deeply involved and the Field Army would take up a position which would enable it to co-operate with the Afghans and, at the same time, protect the North-West Frontier. The most satisfactory positions for this purpose would be those which would prevent the Russians from debouching in force from the passes of the Hindu Kush and from advancing across the Helmand on Kandahar. The waterless stretch of 150 miles between Farah and Girishk on the Helmand would be a formidable obstacle to the Russian advance along the southern route, and would greatly assist the defending force."

In other words, the General Staff is completely prepared, in case of a war against the U.S.S.R., to invade Afghanistan, all, of course, in the guise of "defence."

British imperialism does not divide the task of the military suppression of colonial revolt from that of military intervention against the Soviet Union Nevertheless, it has yet another task, the task of defending the Empire against another robber imperialism, that of the U S A The great naval base in Singapore is being built with the definite aim of challenging the United States, or if necessary Japan, but in the first place the U S A , for hegemony in the Pacific China is the greatest territory in the world whose division among the different great imperialist powers remains at the moment unsettled Just as the war of 1914 18 and the post war crisis of 1920 21 led to the verge of war between Britain, America and Japan for the dividing up of China, so these powers are trying to find a way out of the present crisis by a struggle for the redivision of China That war is the most easy way out of the crisis for the bourgeoisie was shown by Marx and Engels long ago in the *Communist Manifesto* "How does the bourgeoisie overcome these crises? On the one hand by the compulsory annihilation of a quantity of the productive forces, on the other, by the conquest of new markets and the more thorough exploitation of the old ones" (*Communist Manifesto*, p 33)

The war in China at the present moment is the beginning of an attempt by the world bourgeoisie to get out of the present crisis by means of war In this war, in which America is using every effort to prevent Japanese expansion in China, and to embroil Japan with the U S S R , England is supporting Japan But although England will use every effort to prevent the United States increasing its influence in China, it is not altogether to the taste of the British bourgeoisie to see Japan winning an impregnable position on the mainland of the Pacific For Britain the way out of the difficulty is to turn the war into a war upon the Soviet Union and she is steadily pursuing this policy, aided by the insatiable imperialist appetites of the Japanese The British bourgeoisie at the present time is one of the leaders in preparing the war of intervention on the Soviet Union

The War Strength of the Empire

The capitalist way out of the crisis is through increasing the exploitation of the colonies and the winning of new markets by force through imperialist war in the Far East and counter revolutionary intervention against the Soviet Union British reformism sedulously spreads the idea that British imperialism is a "peaceful" imperialism, that it has no militarist aims and keeps up no great military forces

This particularly dangerous illusion should be thoroughly exposed. For the repression of the oppressed millions in the colonies and for waging imperialist or counter-revolutionary wars the British bourgeoisie has a tremendous and exceedingly highly equipped military apparatus. For purposes of maintaining " internal " order alone, there is kept up in all the colonies a great military police force officered by Englishmen, well paid, well armed and isolated from the native masses, as well as receiving full licence to rob and torture the peasantry among whom they keep " order."

In India alone the police (including the village police) amount to 1,423,000 and their corruption is so notorious that even imperialist writers are unable to conceal it. The regular army and air force, including the Indian army and the forces of the native princes in India, consists of 441,798 of all ranks, that is, practically the equivalent of the French army. In addition, there is a territorial army in England of 200,000 which in time of war can be used to replace the regular army at home and on garrison duty in the colonies. The personnel of the fleet amounts to 102,675 of all ranks. So, the total of the army, navy and air force, apart from the territorials, is 544,473.

However, this is far from being the only military force on which the bourgeoisie can rely. All the dominions, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the Irish Free State, have military and naval forces. Ireland has a standing army, while the other dominions have militia armies on the Swiss model. These forces, as was proved in the imperialist war, can have a very high military value. The forces of the dominions amount to an army of 250,000 of all ranks, so that in time of war the British Empire can dispose of an 800,000 strong force of high military quality and of all arms (army, navy and air force), excluding the armed colonial police and the English territorial army. The annual military budget of Great Britain and India without the dominions is about £160 millions a year, far greater than that of any other country in the world.

The British war fleet is the largest and most powerful of any imperialist power. Great Britain alone possesses battleships and battlecruisers built since the imperialist war (" Rodney," " Nelson " and " Hood ") and combining all the experience gained in that struggle. The British cruiser fleet of the so-called Washington type, that is heavy cruisers of 10,000 tons, carrying a heavy weight in guns, is in quality and numbers much ahead of that of other powers. It has been the special service of the

two Labour Governments to the military needs of imperialism that it has shown particular attention to developing this cruiser fleet and the air force With regard to the air force, in equipment and technical perfection it stands in a very high category Mechanisation of the British army has been carried to lengths unheard of in any other country

The strategical disposition of the British forces is extremely well arranged for the two great war purposes of British imperialism, intervention against the Soviet Union and resistance to American imperialism The British control the most important sea routes in the world, with the exception of the Panama Canal But even this canal can be threatened from the British West Indian Islands and British Honduras, the only British colony in Central America The great base at Singapore completely commands the only other route into the Pacific

The centre of British war preparations is to be found in India In all their military plans the British imperialists start off from the proposition that the frontiers of England are not along the Channel but on the North West Frontier of India The military and air bases in North India are so arranged that there can be no mistaking against whom the concentration of British forces there is aimed British penetration into Afghanistan after the overthrow, with British help, of the Amir Amanullah, in 1929, is aiming directly at the Soviet Republics of Central Asia The whole of the British possessions in the Middle East form a military base of tremendous strategic importance Palestine defends Egypt and the Suez Canal and also is the starting point for an overland route to India which it is intended shall eventually go exclusively through English territory The Palestinian port of Haifa, which is to be the end of the oilpipe line to Mosul, is also the starting point of a railway to Bagdad

Airplane bases in Malta, Egypt, Palestine, Irak, India, Singapore and Hongkong form an uninterrupted chain of military bases for the British air fleet and can be used equally well for offence or defence The airplane bases in Palestine are a direct threat to Turkey , the base at Mosul in Irak (the most powerful air base in the world) is aimed at Baku, the centre of the Soviet oil fields, and at the port of Batum and the communications across the Caucasus The " peaceful " character of British imperialism is a complete myth It is the greatest military power in the world and all this tremendous military, naval and air strength is now about to be used for forcing a capitalist way out of the crisis for the British bourgeoisie

Chapter X

THE COLONIES AND THE WORKING CLASS

The Labour Aristocracy and the Empire

Long ago, writing of the relations between the Irish and the English workers, Marx said that " a people which enslaves another people forges its own chains." Indeed, it cannot be too strongly emphasised that in so far as they have participated in the plunder of the colonies, the English working class have strengthened their own oppressors and weakened their own chances of freedom. The English capitalists were able for many generations to guarantee to a large section of the working class, a very high standard of life entirely out of the profits of colonial exploitation. The English worker became known for his " respectability," for his political support of the two capitalist political parties.

The Labour Party, when it was formed, reflected this bourgeois character of the English movement. It was not, and did not even lay claim to be, the party of the working class. It was rather an alliance between this aristocracy of labour and the lower middle class, the petty bourgeoisie, a party not of one class but of two. With the development of imperialism, and the great intensification of class struggle and class exploitation which accompanied it, with capitalism definitely entering on its decline, the possibility of supporting a large labour aristocracy in a privileged position, became much smaller. The basis of such an aristocracy, in conditions of a general crisis of the capitalist system, is rapidly shrinking, while a party which represents the working class, and only the working class, is now being slowly but surely built up in the form of the Communist Party.

But the prejudices and outlook which come from generations of bourgeois influence remain. It is only slowly that the mass of the workers are emancipating themselves from these, building the basis of their unity as a class which alone can guarantee victory over capitalism. The hardest of all prejudices to uproot are those connected with the Empire, the Empire jingoism

which permeates the whole of British life. This feeling is deliberately fostered and spread by the reformist leadership of the British Labour movement, who can congratulate themselves on having produced Mr. J. H. Thomas, who is such a fine flower of imperialist sentiment that at times he appears to be a caricature upon the crudely violent imperial "patriotism" of the bourgeoisie. Yet the ineffable Mr. Thomas is a very significant symptom, the representative of one of the deepest and most dangerous illusions among the workers—the illusion that the Empire is a "benefit" to them in some mysterious form or other.

It has long ceased to be that, except to the small gang of Labour politicians and trade union bureaucrats To day the unemployed Lancashire cotton weaver, or the Dundee jute worker, can see clearly enough that he is not getting much benefit from the Empire or anywhere else. But the illusion that he *might*, if only things were different, persists, thanks to the insistent propaganda of his leaders, and it is in this illusion that English Fascism will find its roots.

The Labour Party and the Colonies

The Labour Party has remained more faithful to the ideals of the capitalist class in the colonial question than in any other, and for a good reason, since the Empire is the real corner-stone of British capitalism The three and a half years of Labour Government, in 1924, 1929 31, left forced labour untouched, failed to emancipate a single child slave, but imprisoned many thousands, hanged scores, and shot down hundreds with bomb or machine gun, including women

The attitude of the Labour Party towards nations struggling to be free, can be judged from the following extract from their manifesto of 1920 on Ireland, when the Irish people were waging a life and death struggle against the Black and Tan regime of terror and blood

"It is impossible," declared the manifesto, "to treat Ireland as a separate country from Great Britain for military purposes. An invasion of Ireland would be an invasion of Britain. . . . The two islands should form a single unit for all warlike purposes"

The pacifist and Labour leaders here speak in the true voice of the imperial general staff. Indeed, pacifism has never proved an obstacle to the development of imperialism's armed forces, and former conscientious objectors have blithely ordered bombing squadrons to attack the villages of Irak or the North

West Frontier. Yet it is not sufficient if we simply say that in colonial questions the Labour Party carries out the policy of the other capitalist parties. True, it does so, but it has nevertheless, to cover up its support of capitalism in this respect as in others, worked out a very specious theory which is intended to make this policy appear as a *Socialist policy.*

The Second International discusses a "Socialist Colonial Policy"

For the origin of that policy we must go back a long way, to 1907, that is to the very interesting period after the first Russian Revolution, when the nationalist and revolutionary movement had just begun to riase its head in India, Turkey, Persia and China, when hundreds of millions of people who had hitherto seemed sunk in helpless apathy, began to stir with a new life. In that year the Second International held a Congress at Stuttgart, at which the colonial question was the central discussion—along with the question of militarism. The Colonies, war and militarism, imperialism had linked these problems together and was forcing them more and more sharply on the attention of the working class.

The German "Socialist" David, opening the dicussion, declared that "Europe needs colonies. She does not even have enough. Without colonies, from an economic point of view, we shall sink to the level of China." A resolution was then proposed by a majority of the Colonial Commission of the Congress and introduced by Van Kol, a Dutchman, "representative of one of the oldest colonising peoples" as he proudly claimed, which contained the following remarkable phrase: "The Congress . . . does not condemn in principle and for all time every kind of colonial policy, which—under a socialist regime—can be a work of civilisation." The resolution concluded by proposing that Socialist members of parliament should propose to their respective governments the conclusion of "an international agreement aiming at creating an international law, safeguarding the rights of natives, of which the contracting nations will be the mutual guarantors." In other words, "Socialists" were proposing the Mandate System in 1907.

The militant section at the Congress, the Bolsheviks, a section of the German Social-Democrats, the Poles, certain French and Belgian Socialists, the Social Democratic Federation through the mouth of Harry Quelch, who was deported from Stuttgart two days later by the German Government, bitterly

opposed and finally defeated this point of view It is interesting, however, that the representative of the Labour Party and I L P, Mr Ramsay MacDonald, supported the resolution

MacDonald considered that "we must have the courage to draw up a programme of colonial policy . Capitalists cannot do all they want in the sphere of colonial policy, for they are generally submitted to the control of parliaments"

Lenin's comment on this discussion at Stuttgart throws a light upon its real meaning and the whole relation of the colonial question to the working class, particularly to the British working class He mentions that Marx liked to recall a saying of Sismondi to the effect that the proletarians of the ancient world lived at the expense of society, whereas modern society lives at the expense of the proletarians "But," Lenin points out, "a wide colonial policy has led to the European proletariat *partly* falling into such a position that the whole of society does *not* exist by its labour, but by the labour of the almost enslaved colonial slaves The English bourgeoisie, for example, draws bigger revenues from the tens and hundreds of millions of the population of India and their other colonies, than from the English workers In such conditions in certain countries a material and economic basis is created for the poisoning of the proletariat of this or that country by colonial jingoism This can, of course, be only a passing phenomenon, but nevertheless it is necessary to recognise the evil clearly, to understand its causes, in order to know how to rally the proletariat of all countries for struggle against such opportunism And this struggle will lead inevitably to victory, for the "privileged" nations comprise an ever smaller share of the general number of capitalist nations"

The Labour Party Policy Report

The policy of the Labour Party to day, in its latest form of the Policy Report on "The Colonies" presented to the 1933 Conference at Hastings, is a direct continuation of the resolution proposed at Stuttgart in 1907, so much so that its very phraseology is often almost the same

The Policy Report has no complaint to make against colonial exploitation as such, only against certain phases of it, mostly connected with the plantation system in East Africa Extraordinary as it may seem, after the picture of conditions in West Africa given by the women's movement in Nigeria, West Africa

is held up as the ideal of "socialist" colonisation in the following passage:

"In the West African Colonies, for example, no land is permitted to be expropriated for immigrant settlers, and the administrative and technical services are run in what is believed to be the best interests of the general native communities. The difference in the results of this policy on the well-being and happiness of the people, as compared with the position in much of East Africa, where a contrary policy has been pursued, is a clear indication of the lines on which a Labour Government must proceed."

The very next paragraph of the Report makes it clear that the Labour Party does not consider the national and social emancipation of the colonial peoples as its aim, but rather their retention and "enlightened" exploitation by a capitalist Britain. "In none of the Colonial territories," runs the Report, "however, has there been a sufficiently conscious and sustained effort to make the education, development and well-being of the common people the main function of the Government. It is this objective for which the Labour Movement stands." How exactly it is proposed to obtain this "development" we shall see later when examining the practical proposals behind these high-sounding words.

It is, however, very interesting to note that the Stuttgart proposal of 1907 that colonies should be exploited under international treaty agreement, finds its complete development here. "It seems," says the Report, "both right and logical that the mandatory system should be accepted for all Colonies inhabited mainly by peoples of primitive culture. The Labour Party, when it is in power, will make such a declaration and will accept the scrutiny of the Mandates Commission in such cases, if it can be arranged." Lenin, commenting on the original Stuttgart proposal, roundly stated that "Socialism never has renounced and never will renounce the defence of reforms in the colonies also, but that has and ought to have nothing in common with any weakening of our principles against conquests, the subordination of alien peoples, violence and plunder, which 'colonial policy' consists of. The very idea of a 'socialist colonial policy' is an utter confusion."

"Capitalism" and "Socialism"

The Labour Party consider that there are two existing policies, roughly represented by the West African and the East African Colonies, of which the first is an "African policy" which socialists should support, and

the second is a "capitalist policy" which they must change The "African policy," because it allows native land ownership and severely restricts ownership by white men, "aims at promoting a native community of agriculturists and arboricul turists, and of fostering the growth of large native industries" It is certainly true that the West African peasant is better off than the plantation slave of Kenya But the Polish worker is better off than the Chinese worker, yet this could hardly be taken as an argument for showing Pilsudski to be pursuing a "socialist policy' as against the "capitalist policy" of Chiang Kai Shek and the Nanking Government

The facts are that the peasants of West Africa are grossly exploited by the British imperialist monopolies who buy their produce and by the feudal land owning system which British imperialism has developed The peasant, though he is not taxed in such a way as to force him to abandon his land and work for a white plantation owner (as in East Africa), is nevertheless, as British officials themselves admit, grossly overtaxed The fact that the native courts use flogging to enforce payment of taxes (admitted by the Colonial Secretary in 1933 in regard to a certain case in Nigeria), is additional and overwhelming evidence of this Native landlordism exists and is growing, money lending exists and is growing, even the plantation system to some extent exists In every sense of the word the policy pursued by imperialism in West Africa is a capitalist policy and so long as capitalism exists in England and the existence of such giant monopolies as the Unilever continues, it will remain a capitalist policy.

It is indeed a new and naive definition of "socialism" or of a "socialist policy," to apply it to places where the tyranny and vile oppression of capitalism work in a more concealed form, and only to call "capitalist" those forms of oppression whose horror is too great to be concealed Yet when we examine the actual proposals of this report, we find that they are aimed at leaving things precisely as they are

On the question of land, it is proposed to protect native rights in land and the natural and cultivated products of the soil Landlordism is "to be prevented or progressively eliminated" How it is to be prevented or eliminated is left an open question But we know that in both West Africa and East Africa great tracts have been simply *stolen* by white settlers or syndicates What is to happen with them? Simply this, our "socialist"

policy will see to it that "no further alienation of land should be allowed," and "where too much land has been alienated, the Governments must be prepared to resume ownership." So the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation need not worry about its 50 per cent. dividends, nor the Kenya settlers about their Old Etonian right to stolen property. For who is to determine whether "too much" land has been alienated? As if every inch of stolen land was not "too much," and the blood and suffering of the natives had not a million times over paid the price of "civilisation."

It is interesting to know that the next Labour Government will prohibit slavery (the last two apparently overlooked it) and that forced and contract labour will only be allowed on the best "socialist" principles, and not abolished altogether. Such questions as the 8-hour day, factory conditions, wages, are of too little importance to be even noticed in this code of liberation. There will however, be "education" and taxation will be imposed "solely for revenue purposes." Finally, the workers of the colonies are already enjoying the full fruits of socialism to a certain extent, so that the establishment of complete socialism should be easily obtained within the period of one more Labour Government. "Already," we are informed, "there is a considerable application of practical socialism in the Colonies in State Railways, Medical Services, Public Works, etc." The workers of the Indian State Railways in particular will rejoice to know they are living under conditions of socialism and will cease to strike against intolerable hours, wretched wages and bullying foremen.

The Labour Party and India

The question of India is left out of the Report altogether, but the Labour Party officially supports the National Government and the White Paper, for the bulk of which it was indeed itself responsible, since it is the considered fruit of the Round Table Conferences which the Labour Government itself initiated. Indeed, speaking on the Indian debate in April 1932, Mr. Maxton wound up by saying, 'I do not want to challenge a vote" and gave as his reason that it would have a bad effect in India if it appeared that there were only five members of the Labour Party who opposed the National Government. The presumption would seem to be not quite what Mr. Maxton wished to convey, since the Indian people could hardly be more pleased to think that every member of the Labour Party supported repression in

India, than to feel that there were five who still had sufficient working class honesty to protest against it

The most subtle and dangerous section of the Labour Party's colonial policy, does not, however, appear in its policy reports but in the books and articles of journalists like Mr H N Brailsford who pose with some success as the friends of "Rebel India" For example, in the *New Leader* on January 8th 1932, Mr Brailsford writes "The Indian Revolution has begun It will inevitably proceed to a social and agrarian revolution" Then, after this radical beginning, he goes on to show how the combination Lord Irwin—Wedgewood Benn was a lesser evil than the present Willingdon—Hoare combination, and even that some sections of the Anglo Indian bureaucracy are a lesser evil than others when he refers to "the bureaucracy, or that part of it which has a police mind," and blames the atrocities of imperialism on this "part of the bureaucracy" Finally, the radical Mr Brailsford who is all for the "social and agrarian revolution," condemns the peasant "no rent" movement in the United Provinces and approves its forcible suppression because it was "not compatible with the truce" (i e, the Gandhi—Irwin truce) At the same time he tries to show that the peasant movement is not political, i e, anti imperialist, but is purely economic On March 5th, Mr Brailsford returns to the attack and blames "the clumsiness of the Government in letting themselves appear the aggressors" The conclusion to be drawn from this is obvious The Labour Party can fight the Indian revolution by less "clumsy" methods and in fact *be the aggressor without appearing so*

The Workers *and the* Colonies

What then should be the policy of the working class towards the Colonies? This question was discussed at the Second Congress of the Communist International on a report made by Lenin, and one of the English delegates, Tom Quelch, the son of the revolutionary socialist who spoke up so boldly against imperialism at Stuttgart, declared that any British worker who attempted to defend the colonial revolution would be considered a traitor by his fellows Lenin in his reply to the discussion attacked this point of view in these words "I wanted further to point out the importance of revolutionary work of the Communist Parties not only in their own country, but also among the soldiers which the exploiting nations use to hold the peoples of their colonies in subjection Comrade Quelch of the British Socialist Party

spoke about this in our Commission. He declared that the rank and file English worker would count it treachery to help the enslaved peoples in their revolts against English rule." Lenin went on to point out that certainly the jingo worker aristocracy in both England and America was a great danger for socialism as well as the greatest support of reformism, but that the real test of a revolutionary party was revolutionary work and help for the exploited and oppressed people in their revolts against the oppressors.

A working-class party should carry on continuous struggle to expose the tyranny and brutality of imperialist rule in the colonies, to organise support for the movements of the colonial workers and peasants, to stop all "little wars" on colonial peoples and agitate for the withdrawal of British military forces from India and the colonies. Its aim should be, not the "development" of the Colonies, as expressed in the Labour Party Policy Report, but their complete national freedom, combined with the maximum help to the native working class in developing industry and laying the foundations of real socialist economy.

Two objections are usually raised to such a policy. The first that it is impossible to give national freedom to backward or primitive peoples, the second that to lose the Empire means starvation and ruin for the English worker and his family. Neither of these objections is frivolous, but both are rooted in a misunderstanding of the real character of socialism, a relic of that middle-class influence which still weighs so heavily upon the workers' movement.

Certainly the natives of, say Kenya, could not be expected to build up a modern socialist country unassisted, but that is a question which can be, and must be, separated from the question of national freedom. For the native population cannot win back its right to life, save itself from extinction, unless it is able to take back its stolen land, drive out the white settlers, make an arrangement by which autonomy is given to the immigrant population from India, and take over for the benefit of the African masses the railways, factories and public works constructed on their slave labour. These things it cannot do unless it has national independence. In West Africa the landlords and money-lenders, the feudal elements, cannot be destroyed, the alienated land restored, the deadly grip of the great imperialist trusts shaken off, without similar nationa freedom.

Given this national freedom, won with the help of the British workers, the native peoples can freely ask for help from the workers of Britain and other socialist states in building up their emancipated countries, help asked for on an equal basis, given without thought or possibility of exploitation in return Only in this way, as the example of similar peoples in the former Tsarist Empire shows, can the leap from primitive darkness to socialist freedom be made, avoiding the horrors of capitalist development

Can Britain exist without Colonies ?

The second question is one which is more persistent and clearly more troublesome to the average worker, whose class consciousness revolts at the atrocities perpetrated by imperialism in the Colonies, but who, in view of England's peculiar economic and geographical position, cannot understand how it would be possible to get along without colonies, particularly without India If the Colonies won their independence they argue, and began to build up their own industries, then no trade would be carried on with England and our own industries would simply die out Yet a little thought only is needed to be convinced that exactly the opposite would happen For it is not socialism which restricts and destroys world trade, but, as is being strikingly proved to day, capitalism

The population of the Empire, including India but excluding the Dominions, is over 400 millions, mostly peasants living in conditions of abject poverty The average annual expenditure of the African peasant on British goods is something under 2s , of the Indian peasant about 3s National freedom under a workers' and peasants' government would have only one object, to raise the standard of life of these vast masses as rapidly as possible, a process quite impossible so long as they remain the victims of imperialist oppression, which indeed, further depresses their already wretched level of life The effects of such a general raising of the standard of life have been shown by the Soviet Union, which cannot expand industry and agriculture rapidly enough to meet the demand Moreover, the Soviet Union has carried on a great and valuable trade with other countries, a trade which, given freedom of exchange and proper credit facilities, might expand indefinitely Yet this foreign trade of the U S S R has been carried on with capitalist countries in the face of great difficulties, embargoes, seizure of trading institutions, even armed attacks How enormous such a trade

might be between socialist countries, or countries whose economy was progressing in a socialist direction under the rule of the workers and peasants, is clear.

Not only would the granting of freedom to the Colonies mean that every factory in England would be kept busy supplying them with textiles and articles of consumption, but it would also mean that the industrialisation of these countries would for many generations keep British heavy industry working to capacity. Socialism can only be built up in Africa and Asia under the leadership of a strong working class and on the basis of the most modern industry. A socialist Britain would do its utmost to develop the forces of production in these countries, and thereby help to create a strong and educated modern proletariat, capable of putting the new countries of Asia and Africa on a level with the " advanced " peoples of the West.

As things are at present the exploitation of the Colonial peoples is the greatest obstacle to the freedom of the British workers, the chief cause of the enormous taxation which the workers of the home country must bear in order to pay for the vast armed forces that protect the Empire against imperialist rivals and keep down internal revolt. The capitalist class in Britain remains powerful because it is still able to transfuse the blood of its Colonial slaves into its own anæmic system. It derives its own class strength, its own reactionary forms of class outlook and class repression, from its parasitic existence at the expense of these Colonial peoples. Just as British imperialism is Colonial imperialism, so British fascism will be Colonial fascism.

A socialist Britain without a people's revolution in India and the other Colonies is unthinkable. All schemes for ending unemployment, for raising the standard of life in Britain, are mere Utopias or demagogy intended to deceive the workers and lower middle-class masses, unless they admit the essential fact that a prosperous Britain, prosperous in the sense of guaranteeing the work and well-being of the whole toiling people, is impossible while the Colonies are enslaved. The path outlined by the Labour Party, Empire Free Trade, Ottawa agreements, cannot raise the standard of life of the Colonial workers and peasants, but only depress them still further, preparing the way for another war for the redivision of the world between the rival robber powers. The worker can see his way to freedom only in the maxim of Karl Marx, " no nation can be free which oppresses another."

APPENDIX I

SOME USEFUL STATISTICS

India

Division of the non urban population

Landlords	3,257,000
Cultivating Owners	27,006,000
Cultivating Tenants	34,173,000
Agricultural Labourers	31,480,000
Others	6,536 000
Fishing and Hunting	1,308,000
Domestic Service	10,858,000

Note the enormous number of labourers and the army of domestic servants created by this mass of pauperised peasantry

Literacy figures

Literate 22,623,651 (of whom only 2,782,213 are females), Illiterate 316,055,231

Palestine

Population divisions according to 1931 census

Moslems	759,952	73%
Jews	175,006	17%
Christians	90,607	8%

A great proportion of the Christians are of Arab nationality.

Jewish settlements

46,000 people on 1,200,000 dunums of land

4¼ dunums = 1 acre

The chief exports of Palestine and Transjordania are grain, olives, wine, tobacco, sulphur, bromide, salt

The African Colonies

Kenya

Area is 224,960 sq miles, the population 3,040,940 of whom 16,812 are Europeans There are 2,882 European planters who in February, 1932, owned between them 248,279 head of cattle, 202,456 wool bearing sheep and 13,760 pigs

The chief exports are coffee, fibres, maize, hides and skins, wool, gold, carbonate of soda, barks for tanning

Uganda.

Population 3,553,534 of whom 2,001 are Europeans. Exports, cotton, tin and ore.

Tanganyika Territory.

Area is 374,000 sq. miles, 5,022,000 population, of whom 8,217 are Europeans.

Exports, sisal, coffee and cotton.

Nigeria.

Area is 372,674 sq. miles. Population 19,928,171. Exports palm oils and kernels, cocoa, cotton lint, mahogany, tin ore.

Gold Coast.

Area is 78,802 sq. miles. 3,121,214 population.

Exports : cocoa, gold, manganese, diamonds, kola nuts, rubber.

Egypt.

Area is 383,000 sq. miles, of which 13,600 are settled and cultivated. Population, 14,217,864, of whom 62% live by agriculture.

Exports : cotton.

Sudan.

Area is 1,008,100 sq. miles. Population 5,605,848. Exports : cotton, gum arabic.

Iraq.

Area is 177,188 sq. miles. Population 2,849,282. Exports : oil, cotton.

APPENDIX II

PUBLIC HEALTH IN INDIA

Famine

A recent inquiry by the Director of the Indian Medical Service, Major General Sir John Megaw, into the public health aspects of village life in India, has produced a most appalling picture The report was summarised in the *Manchester Guardian*

The rate of infant mortality is given as 232 6 per 1,000 children born (i e , almost one child of every four born dies), while for the United Provinces (a Zemindar or landlord province where the distress of the peasantry has almost reached famine point) it is as high as 303 per thousand (or almost one child out of every three born) These figures are much higher than those of the 1931 Census

The report estimates that only 39 per cent of the population can be considered well nourished, 41 per cent are poorly nourished and 20 per cent very badly nourished that is 61 per cent , nearly two thirds of the people of India, or about 210 million human beings, are poorly nourished or worse, while one fifth, or about 70 million people are acknowledged as " very badly nourished," which in Indian conditions means on the starvation line In some provinces especially in Bengal, another landlord province, the figures are much worse

Despite the tremendous drop in food prices due to the crisis, it is calculated that in nearly 40 per cent of the villages the population is excessive in relation to food supply In Bihar and Orissa this proportion is as high as 60, in Bengal it is 46 (all landlord provinces) Yet Sir John Megaw comments that " in many cases in which the food supply was stated to be sufficient there was plenty of evidence in the replies to other questions that this was far from being the case "

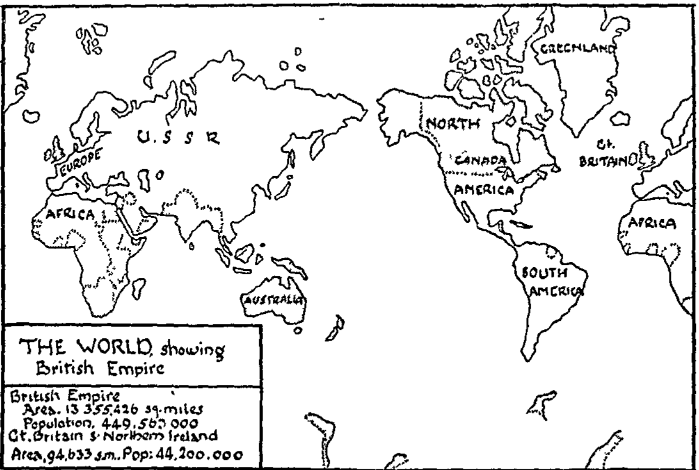
Disease

The picture of disease, the invariable accompaniment of famine, is no less horrible 10 to 15 per cent of the population are reckoned as having been affected in some way or other by venereal disease Tuberculosis is " widely disseminated " and is " increasing steadily and rather rapidly,' being naturally,

worse in the insanitary and overcrowded urban areas. Night blindness, due directly to under-nourishment affects nearly 6,000,000 people, while two million villagers suffer from rickets. Every year no less than 50 million people suffer from malaria, and in some years as many as 100 million.

The report draws the most terrible conclusions, themselves perhaps the greatest indictment of imperialist rule ever framed. This half-starved population has an average duration of life of less than half of what it might be; periods of famine occur in one village out of five as a normal rule; in spite of the high death rate the population is increasing far more rapidly than the output of food and other vital necessaries, while malaria is a constant menace to the health of the whole population.

To pretend that such a vast area of misery, starvation and disease can be tackled by ridiculous trifling such as the compulsory raising of the marriage age, or by charity and propaganda from those very landlord classes who are chiefly responsible, is of course, cruel and philistine folly. Child marriage, the abolition of purdah, the establishment of a real health service in every village, can only come when the conditions come which will allow the production of sufficient of the first necessities of life for the whole population. Those conditions are the end of landlordism, usury and imperialist oppression. Until then the paradox of one of the first food producing countries in the world, and one of the first cotton-producing countries, having a naked and starving people will remain.


GREENLAND
Gt. BRITAIN
AFRICA
NORTH
CANADA
AMERICA
SOUTH AMERICA
U. S S R
EUROPE
AFRICA
AUSTRALIA
THE WORLD, showing
British Empire
British Empire
Area. 13 355,426 sq. miles
Population. 449,563 000
Gt. Britain & Northern Ireland
Area, 94,633 s.m.. Pop: 44,200.000

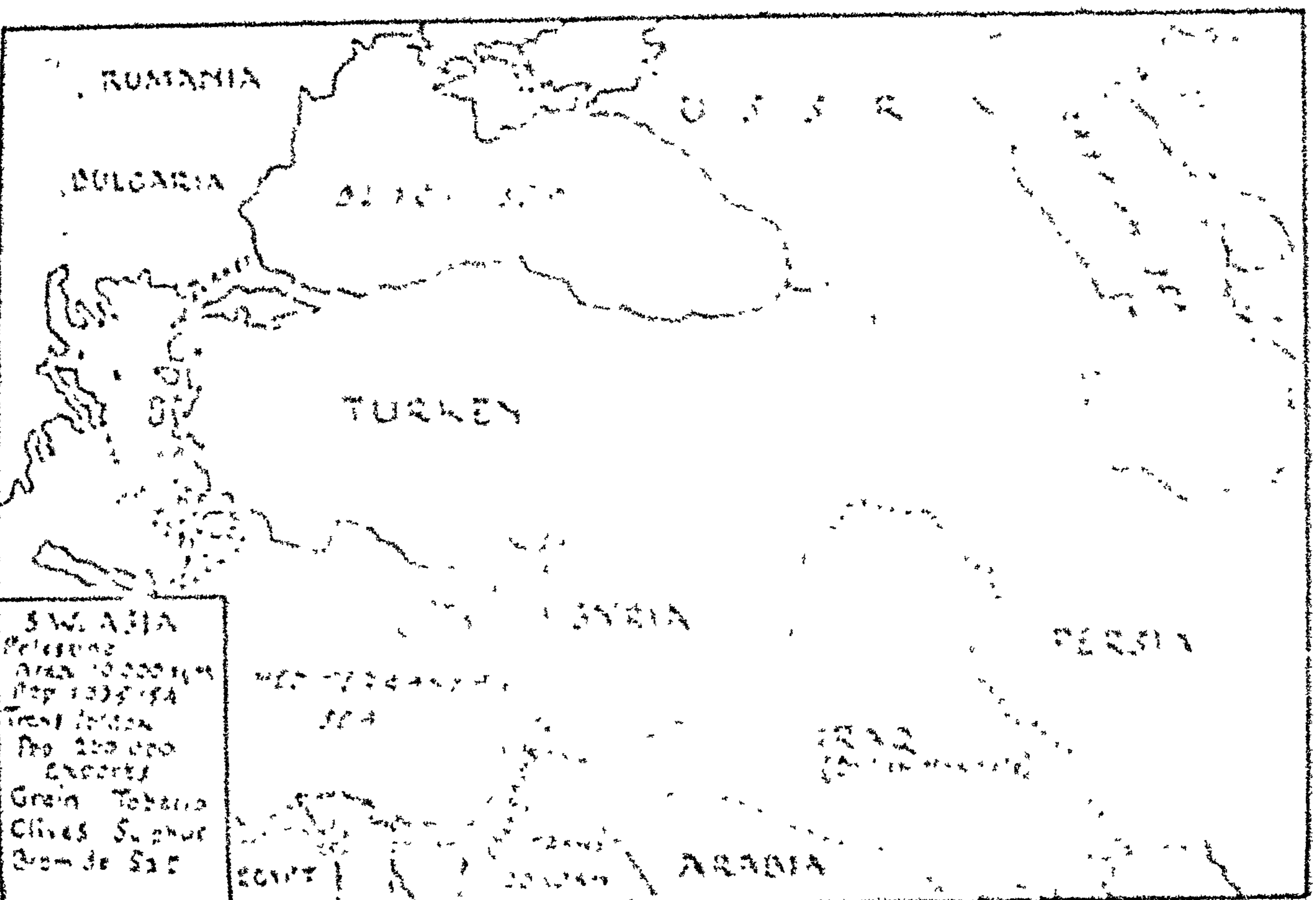
INDIA

Population	349,500,000
English Speaking"	319,000
Urban pop:	32,418,776

EXPORTS
Cotton textiles
Wheat, & other grain
Tea
Jute
Metals & Ores
Seeds
Opium



AFRICA
showing British
posessions shaded.


RUMANIA
BULGARIA
TURKEY
SYRIA
PERSIA
ARABIA
EGYPT
S.W. ASIA
Grain
Olives